

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE

DECEMBER
1932

EDITED BY
LEONARD HUXLEY



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JOHN MURRAY

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

DECEMBER 1932.

FOR MY GRANDSON.

BY SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK.

I. DEDICATION.

Soon after you were born your mother told me I ought to set down my remembrances for you: and to-day, March 13, 1929, being your sixth birthday reckoned in months, I begin to follow her advice by telling you why I thought it very good.

In everyone's knowledge of the past there is a dark interval between the things he has been taught and the things he has observed, the region of events not old enough to be accounted for in the books of his youth, and not recent enough to be within his own memory: say some fifty years before and nine or ten after his birth. Young people are too full of the present and too eager for the future to think much upon this; and their elders are often too busy or too idle to think of it for them. And yet this unfilled gap in a young person's knowledge of the past is a bad thing. If you have no acquaintance with your near ancestors, your remoter ones may seem to belong to a world so far off that you have nothing to do with it and next to nothing to learn from it. Now that would be a grave mistake, leading to troublesome consequences for yourself and others: as indeed has happened more than once, on a grand scale. So you must take my word for it that the times your grandfather lived in are worth your acquaintance, and I shall set down for you what I remember of the persons and matters that interested me in the latter part of the nineteenth and the earlier of the twentieth century. One thing I cannot do is to show you how we looked, what sort of beauty was admired, and how fashions changed; but you can see it for yourself in the back volumes of *Punch*, drawn by many able and some really eminent artists. There also you will learn, more readily than anywhere else, what the greater part of fairly intelligent and instructed English people were thinking and expecting from time to time; and if you make out for yourself, in the light of our later knowledge, how often they thought and guessed wrong, and some of the reasons for it, you will be well on the way to

knowing how hard it is to be right, which is not the least of the beginnings of wisdom in general and the understanding of history in particular. This recommendation is quite serious.

When you read this, will there still be smart youngsters despising the Victorians? or will there be a new fashion of making out Queen Victoria's reign a golden age? Anyhow, I am a Victorian if anyone is. In 1845, when I was born, only eight years of that reign were past, and fifty-five more to come; I do not think the wisest man then living could have foreseen any of the surprising events which the Queen lived to see. It was about the middle of the reign when I was called to the Bar. I will not trouble you at large with my opinions about the strong and weak points of my generation. But certainly we (meaning English people in the lump) thought too much of ourselves, as was natural enough when most of Europe was copying us. Till about 1870 we thought we could give lessons to all the world, especially in political matters. I am not sure that we have not swung too much the other way of late years. The proportion of journalism to other writing, and of clever journalists to other writers, has increased enormously since the middle of the nineteenth century, and it is easier to make good copy of carping than of praising. Likewise we were too cocksure about lots of things. Many pages were written by great logicians wondering how we knew that Euclid's axioms were absolutely true. Some great mathematicians, my dear friend Clifford among them, had the courage to say we knew no such thing, and now we know they are not true for the space we live in, though near enough for common terrestrial purposes. But there was nothing specially British in that kind of dogmatism. The whole civilised world was too cocksure altogether, as you will have to learn in due time.

On one point the Victorians have been censured overmuch, namely, for their prudery. They did not invent it but were saddled with it as a legacy. If you want to see Mrs. Grundy's terrors at their highest, you must look not at Thackeray's or Trollope's novels but at Jane Austen's, written before Queen Victoria was born. Many elements combined to make the peculiar prudishness of respectable English folk in the early nineteenth century (with queer survivals and exaggerations in America much later); one of these was the recrudescence of Puritanism in a diluted form. But the whole matter is by no means simple, and it is too much for a dedication. Quite possibly somebody may have made a full

study of it in the meantime. Without waiting for that you may be assured that nineteenth-century prudishness was only one aspect of a general intellectual fustiness. People who have just seen the end of a great European war followed by an agitated epoch of industrial revolution and domestic reforms do not want to tackle any more fundamental questions for a good while. So they make believe that they have got to the bottom of things—or as near as it is safe to go. Mrs. Grundy was only a kind of martinet adjutant to the battalion whose majors were those worthy veterans Paley and De Lolme. As it was, so it may be again. If analogies hold after a century, Mrs. Grundy's great-granddaughters should come out in your time, short-skirted no doubt and with quite another set of taboos. But one never knows.

One of the labels now affixed to the Victorian Age is that it was an age of cant: this is itself only a new piece of cant. The truth is that cant, which is in great part scraps and leavings of wisdom perverted in the mouths of fools, has abounded, abounds, and will abound in all times. Maxims that embodied the live sense of the fathers are worshipped as dead formulas by their sons. But we know the cant of past generations when we see it, and do not perceive it in our own time. Rebels against outworn dogmas formulate counter-dogmas and thereby produce a new cant of their own. The Pre-Raphaelites afford a conspicuous example: they had an esoteric list of immortal names which found no room for Dante, Shakespeare, or any of the great European poets, and among painters ignored Leonardo, Titian and Velazquez.¹ Much the same may be said of more recent innovators in art and letters who will not allow that, even if their new things are better, the old things were once new and had some good in them. It is true that the eighteenth century was a formulating age, and the men of the nineteenth century bore a perilous burden of ossified formulas.

After all, your English ancestors who lived and worked towards the middle of the nineteenth century had no small cause to think well of themselves. Their nation had stood out continuously, at times all but alone, against Napoleon's ambition to be the master of Europe; it had recovered from the exhaustion of that effort to make so great and swift an advance in commercial and industrial prosperity as had never yet been seen; British invention and enterprise were the admiration of the world, and Scottish thinkers had laid the foundations of modern economic science.

¹ E. F. Benson, *As We Were*, 1930, p. 255.

In politics English institutions, already extolled by Voltaire and Montesquieu in the preceding century, were widely accepted as a model, and imitated with considerable success. Only our traditional spirit of moderation and compromise, in which those institutions were rooted, saved English self-satisfaction from exceeding all bounds.

Now that we have been taught by a series of sharp lessons, it is easy for us to smile ironically or laugh contemptuously at the belief entertained in former generations that final stability had been attained, or could ever be attained, in political or social conditions. Yet we should remember that the illusion of 'Rest and be thankful' was not an invention of the nineteenth century and was not peculiar to England. In fact the contentment of eighteenth-century thinkers had been more crude and more assured, and questioning was rife before the middle of the nineteenth. You shall hardly find in any respectable Victorian author such a deliberate and elegantly balanced complacency as Blackstone's; and Blackstone (I trust you will know as well as I do) was no fool in his time. Belated echoes of old-fashioned optimism occur, no doubt, much later in inferior writers. There are some odd ones in the bad verses of Lewis Morris, who continued to pass for a poet in the later years of Queen Victoria's reign and is now all but forgotten.

If the epithet 'Victorian' is to have its natural sense, it applies to the two last generations of the nineteenth century in Great Britain. Now the British people of those generations, so far from maintaining the eighteenth-century traditions of opinion, conduct and taste which were still dominant in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, were engaged in breaking them up. Certainly the leaders in this work were not at one in aim or method. Some were in search of new ideals, others attempting to revive old ones of divers kinds. But all of them, Anglo-Catholic, Pre-Raphaelite, Darwinian and what not, were thoroughly dissatisfied with the compact and insular conventions of their immediate ancestors. The young adventurers of the twentieth century who profess to owe nothing to them are really standing on their shoulders. No greater mistake can be made than to dismiss the Victorian Age as a period of stagnation. On the surface, no doubt, many outward signs persisted long after the things they had signified were obsolete. This is a perfectly common fact at all times and in all parts of the world. But the emancipation of English thought

from the arid rationalism of the Deistic Age, as an anonymous reviewer aptly called it the other day, was a great and an arduous work, and it was done by the despised Victorians.

Finally, I commend to you an appreciation written by a daughter of my friend and colleague, F. W. Maitland, born in the latter days of the Victorian period and certainly not brought up in its conventions : it opens the last chapter of her enthusiastic but not uncritical study of Christina Rossetti.¹ 'The age of Queen Victoria was one of energy, quick action, the bursting forth of pent-up powers, vivacious enterprise, glorious as the age of Queen Elizabeth in dreams, splendid with courage, noble with humanitarian, religious, scientific, moral, artistic and poetic zeal.' Yes, it was a time of daring adventure and fruitful discovery. The weeds that beset the path and entangled the footsteps of explorers were none of its own growth, but the decaying relics of a past already dead.

What I now proceed to tell you is not a story of my life ; I have not been directly concerned in great events, nor had any surprising adventures. Most autobiographies that are not adventurous are dull, and I have no mind to add that risk to others. Rather I shall try to sum up so much as appears worthy of remembrance in my relations, being of pretty varied sorts, with the world I have lived in : fragments, at best, of a little piece of human society within my limits of time and space. Modern historians, however, have learnt that it is worth while to gather up the fragments, and I hope that my contribution will not be found to contain an undue proportion of rubbish.

II. EVERYDAY LIFE.

By the time you reach years of discretion the dwellings, furniture and general domestic habits of the nineteenth century, in short everything your learned German sums up in the one word *Realien*, may be neatly described and illustrated for you in convenient handbooks. But the authors of those books will not have lived with what they describe, and I have, so that some first-hand notes may still not be amiss. Observe that, as a rule, I speak from my own knowledge only of London and the Universities.

¹ *Christina Rossetti*, a study by Fredegond Shove (Cambridge University Press, 1931), p. 105.

Some things may be said of London that are true only in part of other towns, and certainly not true, for example, of Bath. The buildings of the early twentieth century, or the more solid of them, will be familiar to you; but you will hardly know the fashion of a century before that. All through Queen Victoria's reign dwellers in English towns were as likely as not to inhabit houses dating from the reign of George III. In such a house your father was brought up; the Duke of Cumberland's head adorned the sign of a public-house extant well into my time not many doors off, whereby you may guess the date of the street. Light and air were about the last things those builders thought of; there were queer superstitions about opening windows, and moreover there was a window-tax during the Napoleonic wars. Times being hard, they could not afford to think much of outward appearance, or to use expensive material. The ugliness of London streets is, I believe, due much more to the muddy drab tint of common London brick than to faulty design. Stucco was welcomed for a time; there is even a stucco quarter round about Regent's Park, which Sir Henry Taylor admired vastly when he was young. But stucco soon gets dingy in London air. However, builders' work was in itself not bad; jerry-building set in later and was at its worst (like most arts and crafts) about the middle of the century. But these builders did not dream of such things as bath-rooms, lifts, or hot-water circulation. Everything, including hot water if not cold, had to be carried up and down by hand. Hence a back staircase was thought a mark of elegance; in auctioneers' jargon it earned the name of *mansion* for any house which it adorned, and it persisted in the belated design of speculative builders long after any real use for it had ceased. However, the old houses were solid enough to carry modern improvements, and in the time of my middle age they received additions of bath-rooms, hot-water supply, and finally electric wiring. Drains, of course, were largely reconstructed, but that is a matter of public works, a large topic on which you must seek information in encyclopædic and other publications of the kind which Charles Lamb would not allow to be books. One thing touching public health may be just mentioned in passing. The nuisance of house-flies in towns is all but extinct: you would hardly believe to what a point we tolerated them sixty or seventy years ago, or how crude our remedies were, fly-papers and the like. I do not think there is much about this in print; we took it as an unavoidable incident of warm weather.

Heating was rudimentary ; we burnt soft coal in open grates, for the most part very ill constructed ; Rumford had shown at the beginning of the century how a fireplace should be built (some of his work is in use at the Royal Institution at the time of this writing), but after a while nobody minded him.¹ Hot-water pipes were in more or less use in public buildings as far back as I can remember, but in college halls the large open fireplace, originally made for wood fires, held its own. In the hall of Trinity College, Cambridge, there was, down to the repairing and restoring operations of 1866, a central brazier under a lantern which carried off the smoke.

In domestic lighting I have witnessed a series of revolutions. Candles of divers kinds were the most usual indoor light in my boyhood. The old tallow candles, *tollies* as we called them, were still served out at Eton ; and a certain master who was an excellent scholar but not successful or popular with his division was nicknamed Tolly for his complexion. What we disliked about the tolly was, I think, the need of constant snuffing² more than the greasiness ; anyhow, those who could afford it bought improved candles ; in the 1860's they were 'composite,' but this makeshift soon gave way to the clean hard paraffin or stearin type in use ever since, and like to be so till electric lighting becomes universal, perhaps even then as a humble auxiliary. Real wax candles were a luxury ; I do not remember seeing any larger than a taper in private hands. Candle-light was quite good if you had enough of it, and old-fashioned people did not part from it without regret. Before the reign of electricity set in, each individual table in the dining-room of the Athenæum Club had its own candle, and when the change came old members were inconsolable till every table was furnished with a small electric lamp arranged to look as like a candle as might be. Long before that epoch-making change oil lamps had become the regular sitting-room light producers, for many years burning not mineral but whale or vegetable oil. During my Cambridge residence evening work was done with the aid of the moderator lamp, an ingenious French invention. You shall understand that the vegetable burning oils were too heavy for the wick to suck up, so they must either flow down to it from a reser-

¹ Some country houses had adopted his model about 1795. 'The fireplace . . . was contracted to a Rumford' (Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, ch. 5, *ad fin.*, p. 162 in vol. 5 of the Novels, ed. Chapman, 1923, and see the editor's note at p. 269).

² One could either trim the wick or snuff it quite out. A blown-out wick smouldered and could be revived by a 'rekindling breath' (*Northanger Abbey*, ch. 7, *ad fin.*, p. 170, ed. Chapman).

voir above (which was easily managed with hanging lamps and wall lamps, but awkward for a portable one standing on a table) or be forced upwards. The latter method was worked in the moderator by a compact miniature pump; this was driven by a spring that had to be wound up every two or three hours, and if an absent-minded student forgot the time he was pulled up by a failure of light, a charred wick and a blackened chimney. Mineral oil lamps were free from that trouble, and their fuel was cheaper, but for a long time they were not safe from explosion: such an explosion made a leading case in our law reports, and their use was largely forbidden in schools and colleges. The 'duplex' wick and other improvements overcame this difficulty somewhere about the time when I was called to the Bar. So the paraffin lamp reigned for about a score of years in London; the moderator survived much longer in Paris. Gas was never much liked in London for use in sitting-rooms, partly because it was too hot and partly for want of a satisfactory burner. In the north gas lighting was overdone; once when I was a judge's marshal at Manchester (my uncle Baron Martin's, I think) the judges rebelled against the glare and heat in their lodgings and called for candles. The Welsbach incandescent burner came to give gas a renewed innings, and has succeeded to a considerable extent, especially for street lighting (of which I do not intend to speak); but it is handicapped by the want of anything so convenient as the electric switch close by the door. Every new form of lighting that was introduced was said to be bad for the eyes. Probably this was once said of all lamps whatever, certainly it was of mineral oil lamps, and has been of electric light. I do not believe there was anything in it. As to electric lamps, it is now quite well settled that their effect is according to the discretion with which you use them. It is a matter of appropriate glass and shades and reflectors. For the general illumination of a room an equable light diffused by reflection from ceiling or walls is in every way the best, and for this purpose electricity has no rival. Gas finds its compensation in much increased employment for heating and cooking. There is no assignable limit to the possible future uses of electrical energy; doubtless you will see many of which I cannot even dream. What if it were to provide miners at a reasonable cost (I suppose that, apart from cost, the thing would need no great invention) with a perfectly safe hand-lamp and a practically fool-proof explosive power?

In order to understand the evening aspect of a Victorian family circle it must be noted that commonly there was a solid round table in the middle of the room, and on the middle of the table a pair of candles, whose light the party enjoyed in common while they read, knitted, or talked as the case might be. When the table had to be cleared for a round game the candles would be shifted and put near the edge. A modern young man or woman transported into such a drawing-room might exclaim with Malvolio, 'I say to you, this house is dark': but we did not feel it so.

Long before the round table disappeared from the Victorian drawing-room the dining-table underwent a revolution. About 1860 the presiding host laid down the carving knife, and his office, of which carving a goose was the severest test, was transferred to a side table and ultimately to the kitchen. 'Russian dinners' was the catchword of the change¹: not being a specialist in gastronomic history, I cannot explain or verify the supposed Russian origin. The new custom gradually spread from company dinners to general domestic habits. No doubt the old way lingered for many years in the country. My last sight of it was when, in the 1890's, I presided at a meeting of the Devonshire Association at South Molton and was called on to carve at luncheon for some thirty members. In my undergraduate days we still 'fleshed our maiden steel in carving' in the hall of Trinity College, Cambridge, as my father said of his generation. Reform came not long after Thompson's accession to the Mastership, in this as in greater matters.

Another revolution spread over the most part of the century was the advancement of the dining hour. It had been noon in the Middle Ages; we read in a Year Book that the King's judges firmly refused to start a new argument after eleven o'clock, saying that the Court was already sitting quite late enough. In Dr. Johnson's time the regular hour was three. Jane Austen seldom gives exact particulars of hours or days, but I think her county families dined at five. Colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, following the suit of London tardily, were dining at four in my father's time, and five or thereabouts in my undergraduate generation; at Trinity, numbers compelling a division, the high table dined at half-past four and freshmen at half-past five, whereas it has been the other way since I took my degree. Charles Kingsley

¹ My father wrote an article under that title, which the reader was assumed to understand, in *Fraser's Magazine* for April, 1859.

was persuaded (the passage is somewhere in *Water Babies*) that five o'clock was the proper dinner hour for getting the most work out of a day. Cambridge made a jump of two hours towards 1870 (Trinity in 1867), but many Oxford Colleges and the Inns of Court (the latter giving in last) halted at six o'clock much later; for some time we dined at six on Sundays only at Corpus, under a notion (quite wrong, as it turned out) that thereby the college servants were better able to go to evening church. The hours of plays and public meetings were shifted rather slowly, so that an early collegiate dinner might be a convenience (in my youth evening dress was unusual at the play, though necessary for the opera). Seven o'clock was the normal time in private houses as far back as I remember, but I do not know whether it prevailed so soon in the country; probably there were still old-fashioned people dining at six in London. About 1870 dinner parties jumped on another half-hour, but half-past seven was still thought rather late for ordinary days. Some ten years later there was another jump to eight o'clock, or seven-forty-five for eight; there were symptoms of yet a further advance, but the experiment was found inconvenient and did not persist, Queen Victoria's example notwithstanding: why she chose to dine very late I have never heard. These particulars may seem dull, but you will want them for understanding nineteenth-century literature, just as one may make odd blunders in reading medieval books for want of knowing a little of medieval customs. The eleven-o'clock impatience of the king's judges which I have already mentioned misled an American commentator into the wild imagination of a sitting prolonged till near midnight; he forgot, among other things, that there were no means of lighting Westminster Hall. The reason of this unbroken secular change is not far to seek. Man goes to dinner (when he is civilised enough to be fairly sure of a dinner) when the day's work or the bulk of it is done. Our medieval ancestors rose betimes to secure the benefit of daylight, having little artificial light at home and, as aforesaid, none in public buildings. Later hours were made possible by improved lighting and necessary by the increase of the world's business. During the transition period of dinner at four, five or six o'clock, that increase was dealt with by going back to work in the evening: such indeed was Cambridge practice even in my time. When my father was young at the Bar evening consultations were quite usual. Many men, of course—apart from journalists, whose hours are peculiar—are

still driven to night work unless they prefer, as my grandfather did, to get up very early. But this is outside the extension of regular business hours which was the determining factor. The habits of the House of Commons are altogether anomalous and may be left out of the general account.

On the Continent of Europe the corresponding movement was on the whole slower than in England, and the pace varied in different countries. In Paris as late as 1880, in Berlin a dozen years later, evening dress (as we call it here) was not usual at small dinners of friends: the Continental tradition was that the black coat was appropriate not to the hour but to the occasion; it was civilian full dress by day as well as by night. Bridegrooms, in France at any rate, and candidates at university examinations wore it. Once, at Leyden, I saw a poor young man in tail coat and white tie, who had come all the way from the Dutch East Indies, make a pitiful show of ignorance before a whole group of professors including no less a man than Cobet, the consummate master of Greek whom Shilleto of Cambridge recognised as his equal. In Latin Shilleto allowed one scholar to be his superior: 'I bow to Madvig,' I have heard him say. But of Shilleto there shall be a word elsewhere in his proper company. Then at Perugia, many years later, I found myself by a happy accident undertaking to represent Oxford (which the Law Faculty ratified at the first opportunity) at the celebration of that very learned civilian Baldo's fifth centenary; there was a day meeting with long official speeches and an evening dinner with informal ones, all quite short and to the point. For the meeting I put on the least rustic morning clothes I had, and for dinner the evening dress I carried for unexpected occasions. This was my English instinct, and wrong, for the afternoon ceremony was the real solemnity. Nowadays cosmopolitan manners are tending to level down peculiar customs and observances everywhere; I am apt to think their last refuge may be in collegiate and quasi-collegiate bodies. We have some curious ones, though they cannot be very ancient, at the Inns of Court. Regimental distinctions and customs, which are justly cherished for the sake of their honourable origins, are likely to all seeming to live as long as the regiments themselves.

To return to dining, the hours of the Colonial period lasted well into my time in New England. Oliver Wendell Holmes (not my learned friend in the law and lifelong friend in fact whose praise is in the Supreme Courts of Massachusetts and the United

States, but his father of literary fame and identical name) introduced me to the Saturday Club of Boston in 1884, and an excellent company it was. Its weekly dinner was held at half-past two, then, as in the Colonial days, the usual hour of New Englanders in the country though no longer so in the city. Dr. Johnson, if we could have called him up, would surely have charged the Boston 'rebels' with backward rusticity—backward by a full half-hour as judged under the meridian of Fleet Street.

The art of dining has been expounded by many able writers from Brillat-Savarin onwards, Walker of *The Original* being the English pioneer of reform, and the subject is too large for me to dwell upon. Enough to say that until the last quarter of the nineteenth century British ignorance was profound, save for a few shining lights in the darkness. The proof is in the common routine of public banquets and private dinner parties: for a minor example I quote from my diary the result of ordering an omelette at a Welsh inn of some pretensions in the spring of 1867: 'a tough circular plate of uniform thickness in which onions were the predominant ingredient.' It would have rolled down Snowdon intact. Typical Victorian bills of fare were wrong in conception, monotonous in detail, and for the most part slovenly in execution. My parents, in a quiet way, were among the advanced guard of those who knew better. Not that the fault was with genuine English cookery, which had and has great merit within its proper bounds and under the right English conditions: it lay in the bungling imitation of misunderstood French models. Of drink, again, you may read at large in authors of good repute, and I say nothing. Only, if you would know the horrors that French wine suffered at one time in the cellars of English wine merchants, look out *Claret* in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. As late as 1892 a special commission sent to Trinidad found that the 'claret' imported from England was doctored—presumably to suit the supposed taste of the British colony—and took counsel with a highly respected member of the French colony (which maintained its language and individual character, and no doubt still does so).¹ He earned the Commissioners' gratitude by telling them where pure wine of Bordeaux was to be had.

Contemporary prints, which you can see in many reproductions

¹ French immigration in the early years of the Revolution practically swamped the culture of the original Spanish occupiers. It is a curious history and not the less profitable for being on a small scale.

if not in the originals, will be your best introduction to the outdoor aspects of London in the nineteenth century. But they will not show you much of the busy thoroughfares eastward of Park Lane and St. Martin-in-the-Fields, nor disclose the fact that, long before motor vehicles were invented, congestions of traffic were not only possible but frequent in some quarters. In the afternoon hours a more or less continuous block anywhere between Chancery Lane and Oxford Circus was quite regular in my experience when there was as yet no tube to relieve the rush of home-going passengers. Moreover, police regulation of traffic was in its infancy. Nowadays there is much talk of noise; people are worried by novel attacks on their ears but forget the old ones. Quiet has never been an attribute of capital cities. Rome was smoky and clamorous as well as wealthy in Horace's time; it is not easy to see where so much smoke came from, but so Horace tells us. There is no reason to think that Nineveh and Babylon in their day had fared better. As to the quality of London noises, horse-hoofs and iron-tyred wheels on paved road (for many streets were still paved within my memory) or even macadam were loud enough, and the cries of hawkers and newsboys and the instruments of street musicians were no less discordant and strident than our motor horns: not to mention the whistling for cabs, which at certain hours amounted to a nuisance in the region of clubs. The suppression of this last plague is one of the few benefits received from the War that may be set off against the generally increased expense and cumbrousness of life. Do not suspect me of thinking that the freedom of Europe was not on the whole worth a great price, even the price of all the lives given for it; I speak here of the lesser matters. So the truth about noise in London is not that where it is greatest it is really worse than before, but that it is more widely spread; the streets are more thronged and for more hours of the day, but the real difference is that fewer thoroughfares are quiet. In like manner it is well known to mountaineers that the labour of a day's climbing is to be measured not by the occurrence of specially difficult passages but by the lack of easy ones. Oases, however, are not wanting in our wilderness of brick and stone. First the parks, in which one may walk from Kensington Palace to the Horse Guards with only one crossing of a street at Hyde Park Corner; then the squares and public or semi-public gardens conspicuous to everyone who has seen London at all; and besides these a number of retired little grass plots, even

little ponds and fountains, not so familiar but not without lovers. One such is in the old Staple Inn, no farther from Chancery Lane on the east than the gardens of Lincoln's Inn on the west. New Square, Lincoln's Inn, by the way, has become the home of a pair of wild ducks. Lincoln's Inn Fields belong to the larger and more notorious class of open spaces, and the younger generations know nothing of the time well within my remembrance when there was only a rather ill-tended enclosure reserved for a handful of subscribers. Here the London County Council has done admirable work; and almost all the London trees and flowers are better kept than they were, and with better taste.

As to general facilities for moving about London, meaning thereby London proper, the Golden Age covered the reign of King Edward VII and outlasted it by a year or two. Completion of the underground railway system, delivered by electric working from vapours of steam and imperfectly consumed smoke, had relieved the roads and greatly shortened the time for journeys longer than a mile or two. Motor vehicles, not yet a crowd of themselves, came opportunely to abate the nuisance of irritating and evil-smelling stable dust with which the overgrowth of horse traffic was filling the air in the summer months. The hansom cab was at its best, like stage-coaches just before railways came in: and certainly a well-appointed hansom was a mighty pleasant conveyance on a fine day. Ten miles an hour, or maybe twelve, with the air on one's face and a clear outlook, made a singular combination of enjoyments; a four-wheeled open carriage was not near it. Certainly one could not bow from a hansom, and a visible lifting of the hat was not easy. However, my only real problem in that position was on a day when I wore not a hat but wig and gown, coming away from the Chancellor's reception of the Bar before the autumn opening of the Courts. As my hansom approached Buckingham Palace a carriage driving in crossed our front a few yards ahead. It contained persons of great importance, persons who must somehow be saluted: but how? A wig is not a hat to be taken off, a bow was impossible. Being a veteran of the Inns of Court Corps I fell back on a military salute as the only possible gesture; it was not strictly correct with a wig, but it was graciously returned. One occasional danger of the hansom is, I suppose, quite forgotten now. A jibbing horse might kick the splash-board to pieces; I have known it twice; one of those times I was convoying a Unionist delegate from Ulster who had never

been in London, so he got a new experience that was not in the bill. The foil that set off the hansom was the four-wheeled 'growler,' a byword for slowness and shabbiness. A smart four-wheeler was for some obscure reason extremely rare. Our modern taxi has shaken off any following of the growler's habits that may have clung to it in youth, and it must be confessed that a good taxi is as good as the hansom ever was, with the advantage of greater speed. Unhappily it may not use that advantage inside London. Constant slowing down and stopping reduce the average to something even below the old four-wheeler's, not counting the departures from the shortest line imposed by traffic regulations. Indeed, a fast walker might back himself against the taxi for distances up to two miles, say from the Marble Arch to Chancery Lane—except that the pavements are crowded too. (But, as I revise this for the press, there is a beginning of effectual reform.)

The vanished and vanishing conventions of English nineteenth-century society would furnish matter for a volume; I can only point out one or two. Any observant reader of the classical novelists will perceive that, down to the middle of the century or later, rank and title carried far more dead weight, so to speak, than they do now. Not even the most foolish baronet could at this day be so puffed up with the mere fact of baronetcy as Jane Austen's Sir Walter Elliot in *Persuasion*. What is rather curious is that this kind of superstition was compatible with a good deal of slovenliness in matters of form and even of substance. At one time unpunctuality was rather in fashion. King Edward VII had a leading part in putting a stop to the Victorian slackness. He was not averse to Liberty Hall manners on informal occasions, but he perceived, quite rightly in the main, that ceremonial usage of every kind must be exact on pain of becoming ridiculous. Details would not be convincing unless presented at such length as would be tedious, so you must take a grandfather's word for it that the change is evident to old Victorians. Domestic service had an odd etiquette of its own. Every male householder who was a gentleman by birth or profession was expected to keep a manservant, not for show but for the supposed necessity of guarding 'the plate.' A gentleman must have real silver, if it were only a dozen or two of spoons and forks; and it was a man's job to keep it safe against thieves by sleeping in or near the pantry. Another relic of ancient insecurity (rather that, I think, than a general distrust of under-servants' honesty) was the locking up of household stores. Tea

in particular, having once been a costly luxury, was treated with special respect. Day by day the mistress of the house, or the confidential housekeeper in a large establishment, served it out from store into the expense magazine, a more or less ornamental box called a tea-caddy, which itself was locked except when tea was being made. Sugar and coffee were not so jealously guarded, so far as I remember.

One irrational but in its day universal superstition, to me an unfortunate one, was that nobody under the age of leaving school could have any business with spectacles. In the Victorian era parents dosed their children on every slight provocation with drugs which probably did more harm than good, and left eyes and teeth to take care of themselves: the dentist was regarded as a mere occasional tooth-drawer, the oculist as little more than a master spectacle-maker. So, until I put on my first glasses after leaving Eton, I never understood why I could make nothing of cricket (just because I could not see the ball in time), nor why faces, even of people I was seeing every day, were confused in my sight at the other end of the room. Shyness and awkwardness are the inevitable consequence of seeing less than other folks and not knowing how much less. Now we understand that the testing of defective sight should not be delayed, and that a misfit in lenses is far more serious than a misfit in clothes. Whether the people we call in the lump ancients had on the whole much better sight than ours is, I conceive, an insoluble question. What is certain is that we owe the invention of spectacles (as well as clocks, wind-mills, and printing) to those Middle Ages which in the eighteenth and even the nineteenth century were called barbarous.

INCREDIBLE INSECTS.

BY MALCOLM BURR, D.Sc., F.E.S.

THE Transactions and Proceedings of learned societies are not generally regarded as light reading, or even interesting matter, for the layman, but in his Annual Address for the current year the President of the Entomological Society has given us a whole series of incredibles.

All insects are extraordinary, and it is hard to choose one that is more remarkable than another, for the world in which they live is so fantastic that we can hardly understand its meaning and mechanism. What perfect chemical laboratories are those grubs of beetles which, as Dr. Eltringham points out, are capable of feeding normally and growing fat on substances that are deadly poison to ordinary animals, such as opium, tobacco and even strychnine! Surely the most hard-bitten creature in existence is the little beetle *Niptus hololeucus*, of which no less than one thousand five hundred and forty-seven were taken out of a bottle of casein that had been stoppered for twelve years. The same species carried on quite happily in an unopened tin of stramonium leaves for fifteen years and has been known to thrive in the cork of the very cyanide bottle that entomologists use for killing their specimens: it simply revels on cayenne pepper, and finds an agreeable diet in sal ammoniac.

These eccentric beetles are rivalled by some kinds of fly, especially of the family *Ephydridæ*. So great is the competition for existence that some of these have specialised in life under perfectly impossible conditions and will thrive in brine-pits, strong solutions of borax, alkaline lakes and hot springs. Perhaps the greatest biological curiosity of the world is *Psilopa petrolei*, which lives and thrives in . . . crude petroleum! So tough is it that it can live indefinitely in cedar oil and withstand the action of strong alcoholic micro-formol for twenty minutes.

After that I would believe anything of an insect.

Ils sont capables de tout !

Still, they have their likes and dislikes. In a general way
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they prefer warmth and flourish in the most fantastic exuberance of kind and number in the tropics, but some carry this to excess. *Thermobia furnorum*, for instance, a close relative of the silver fish, sometimes seen behind the glass of old pictures; this delights in perfectly stifling temperatures, much greater than even cockroaches and crickets, which like the neighbourhood of ovens and steam-pipes. At the other extreme we have a kind of blend between a cricket and a cockroach which, oddly enough, prefers cold, *Grylloblatta*, which thrives at an altitude between six and seven thousand feet in Canada and actually prefers a temperature about freezing-point.

As a rule, insects are short-lived creatures, and probably few survive twelve months, including all the stages. But some have a larval life far greater than that of the perfect form. Famous is the case of the mayfly, which, as most fishermen know, has a rudimentary mouth and so cannot partake of nourishment, its whole mature life being a brief but glorious honeymoon. Yet it has taken three years' training under water as a larva and a nymph to qualify for this apotheosis. But not only is the mouth rudimentary: the whole digestive tract, no longer required for purposes of nourishing, has been converted into an aerostat to enable it to make its fluttering love-dance.

Some insects seem able to prolong this larval stage indefinitely. Dr. Gahan recorded one which lived in the wood of a pencil-box for thirty years, and Packard records one that seems to have lived for forty-five. This must be the explanation of the fact that old timbers may be infested for ages before any beetle appears. One wonders how the grubs can find moisture, buried year in and year out in the dry timber; it has recently been shown that it provides its own, having evolved a process for breaking down its own fat into carbon dioxide and moisture.

Rivals to the long life of these beetle grubs are the cicadas, whose deafening shrill wearies the ears at certain seasons in hot countries, when there is the surprising appearance of millions that have suddenly and simultaneously reached maturity after seventeen years as a grub. The males make up for the long silence, and for that of their mates who are dumb, by the din they do create when their turn comes. In the forest of Angola I could hardly hear the voice of my friend, though they were quickly thinned by their numerous enemies. Travelling along the banks of the Caspian by the foothills of Daghestan, when all other living things were lying

gasping in the shimmering heat, I have heard these irrepressible screamers make such a din that it overwhelmed the noise of the train.

Insects have also curious methods of reproduction of their kind. Many seem able to dispense with the male sex, as many Phasmids or stick insects, several sorts of which have been kept in captivity eleven years or more and gone on laying fertile eggs without the collaboration or production of a single male. The complicated life cycles of the aphides or plant lice are known in broad lines to most fruit- and flower-growers. Less familiar is the production of their kind by the larvæ of certain flies, the strangeness of which will be appreciated when it is realised that a larva is essentially a sexually immature creature, whose very definition excludes this function. This phenomenon is known as pædogenesis, with which we may perhaps compare polyembryony, when a single egg, instead of bringing forth a single creature, breaks down into an embryonic mass from which may grow several thousands of the parent form. Small wonder that insects are wellnigh universal.

They are not far short of it, and the suffering they inflict is incredible. With insects one can talk only in superlatives. It is not only that they are incapable of pity, but that some seem even to enjoy inflicting pain. Some ants, for instance, which with termites are probably the most intelligent of the insects, kill their victims by stretching. As Dr. Eltringham points out, the human species invented this method too, but it was left to the insect to think out the diabolical detail of injecting an irritant poison into the dislocated joints.

Once I kept a monstrous carnivorous thing, a sort of nightmare of a grasshopper, as big as a man's hand, called *Saga*. I fed it on a creature nearly as big and strong and certainly more active than itself, *Decticus*, well armed, with legs capable of carrying at a leap a couple of yards. The unerring, irresistible embrace of the *Saga* seemed like the advance of a machine; there was something, I thought, very terrible in those appallingly callous, great, goggle, unblinking eyes, incapable of expression, as the creature held its prey to its chest and began unconcernedly chewing away at its throat, quite regardless of its frantic struggles. I used to watch in morbid fascination, as the violent spasmodic kicks of the great *Decticus* grew fainter, and then the head-capsule assumed an unnatural angle and I knew it was all over. It was like feeding a lion upon leopards.

It is a fortunate thing indeed for the rest of the world, not only for mankind but for the vertebrates in general, with whom we have some fellow-feeling, that insects, though their numbers are beyond count, are at least of reasonable size. There is a definite reason for the limitation of an insect's bulk. They started on a much larger scale, for in the Devonian and Carboniferous periods dragonflies two feet in expanse used to hawk their prey. But bigger than that they could not evolve for a physical reason. Insects did not evolve lungs. They set out along a different line of evolution, for they breathe by diffusion by means of tracheæ, a process which, Dr. Eltringham points out, becomes very slow at a short distance from the outer air. Tissues a quarter of an inch from the surface will soon become deficient in oxygen, so it is not a mere matter of chance that few insects are more than half an inch thick.

Consequently modern insects are usually small things, so we have much for which to be thankful, but some tropical Coleoptera attain a length of six inches, and when a goliath beetle flies overhead in West Africa it both looks and sounds like a small aeroplane. The largest known insects are from the same region, the great stick insects from the Congo, *Palophus*, which is nine inches long. In the tropical part of South America there are brightly coloured locusts, *Tropidacris*, with an expanse of wing over ten inches. At the other end of the scale we have *Trichogramma*, a parasite so tiny that no less than twenty may grow up and develop inside the egg of a butterfly.

Yet many of the smallest insects have a most elaborate structure. Eltringham has dissected out the heads of certain small caddis-flies, and Mosely discovered in them, as an accessory to the normal organs, sets of glands, scent-scales and extensible brushes, protected by folding covers, and all neatly arranged in the back of a head only one-fiftieth of an inch across. One hardly knows which to marvel at most, the microcosm of nature, or the skill and ingenuity of the men who can dissect out the details and interpret them.

The eyes of these minute creatures are highly organised. Most wonderful, perhaps, are those of the big dragonflies that hawk over our ponds and streams, such as the great blue or rust-red *Aeschnas*. These have a pair of great staring goggle eyes which are built up of no less than fifty thousand lenses. That is not all. Those in the upper part, to warn the owner of impending danger, can take in a wide field and recognise large objects that might

threaten it, while those on the under-side are adapted for examining its food.

The great ancestral dragonflies are referred to above. The space of time which has elapsed between them and these *Aeschnas* of to-day is ample for the evolution of the endless variety of insect design, with all their limitless fecundity and variety, for the radio-physicists tell us that they fluttered their great wings about two hundred and fifty million years before the ancestors of Man assumed his upright posture. That is a pedigree to be proud of. In unbroken continuity of the family tree it is rivalled by the degenerate scion of a once lordly stock, that has indeed come down in the world, the cockroach, which swarmed in, if it did not dominate, the forests in which was being deposited the coal to warm mankind.

Just as Dr. Eltringham concludes with a quotation from Holland, who figures the earth eventually run down and draws an eloquent picture of the last living thing upon it, a lone bug by the eternal snows of Panama, so may we conclude by a quotation from the President himself, with whose fascinating Address we have just taken such liberties. Insects, he states, are the most versatile of creatures; to sum up their powers in that strange nightmare world of their own, they are ' . . . at home in all surroundings, can thrive on . . . deadly poison, live in crude petroleum, hot springs and strychnine, survive for more than half the lifetime of a man on a diet of dry wood, produce complicated organic compounds, run, fly, swim and lay a million eggs a year, exhibit elaborate physiological structure in the eighth part of a cubic millimetre, assume the outward appearance of other insects, of inanimate and entirely alien objects.' And, he continues, the very study of insects which seem to have been the very triumph of Life, warns us of the direction in which they failed. 'After hundreds of millions of years this maintenance of mere life at the expense of the individual may be said to be all that they have attained. Life without individuality brings no achievement. Those . . . who . . . seek . . . to reduce all to an inferior level of mere existence, devoid of ambition or reward of enterprise, will be looked upon by a more intelligent posterity as the greatest enemies that have ever hampered human progress.'

THE QUADRIGA.

BY JOHN HORNE.

PATRICK DALE opened his eyes. It was a painful process, for the lids stuck together and his head throbbed: still, he was awake and something was happening, so it had to be done. At first he thought that he had not succeeded. There was a sort of semi-darkness with purple patches and twinkling stars, and as he had been seeing stars for a long time with his eyes tightly closed, it needed an effort of concentration to realise that these were different. In any case they were fading, which was a good sign. A grey light was invading everything; the thin black smudge that crossed his middle view was turning into a line of sickly green palms; the purple patches were merging in yellow water, and close in front of him a ship's rail rose and fell gently, in turn hiding and revealing things that grew clearer at every vision. Suddenly a warmer glow flooded the scene, and he knew that the sun had shot up from the ocean behind him. 'Oh hell!' he muttered. Then, as though the remark required a complement, he added, 'Good-bye, Africa,' and closed his eyes again.

It was not an auspicious departure, on the contrary it meant failure—just one more failure people at home would say—and in truth there were already several to his debit, each a masterpiece of its kind that dovetailed into the others like a chapter of a well-written novel. The term rolling stone did not apply to Patrick Dale. He was more like a meteor, rocketing into things—and out of them—with equal dexterity: and if his devil-may-care character made men critical of him at first, his terrific keenness soon disarmed them. Women frankly adored him, not that he was particularly good-looking, but because he had what is known as 'a way with him,' and could not help being as fickle as they. With the mounting sun he opened his eyes for the second time and sat up. To wakefulness and aching limbs the well deck of a tramp steamer no longer offered the imaginary comfort of darkness and drunken oblivion. For Patrick had been drunk, very drunk, though perhaps in his case it was a good thing. If he hadn't been drunk his head would have hurt much more, and probably he wouldn't have got on board at all, but might still be lying at the foot of that telegraph pole, with Gerald laughing

at him like a damned fool and the girl—what was her name? . . . Amina—yes, that was it . . . Amina bandaging his head. Pretty little thing she was too, the kind of pleasant thought that remains when things are becoming unpleasantly real again.

'Good-bye, Africa,' he repeated, raising his hands to his head. It was swathed in turban-like bandages and hurt atrociously, but Patrick had made up his mind that, pain or no pain, it was time to review the past and plan the future in the mental diary he always kept when it was too late. Six months ago—on his twenty-fifth birthday to be exact—he had landed, gloriously hopeful and determined, at Dar-es-Salaam, and now he was leaving in a dirty tramp steamer, with a receipt for his passage to England and little else in his pocket. What had happened in the meantime was just the same old story over again. He simply couldn't be a coffee planter, at least he could plant it all right, but the monotony of life on that wretched plantation, the prospect of years of waiting—learning the business, the owner of the place called it—while the world outside quivered with adventure, was more than his volatile spirit could bear. He remembered how grudgingly his Uncle Charles had given the money to send him out. Even now he could hear the old fellow's words of warning, 'It's your last chance. Make good, or go to the devil,' and he knew that they were final. So much for the past. The future seemed even more dismal. Where help was concerned Uncle Charles would be a wash-out, but there was worse to come, there was Joan. His heart sank as he thought of the only girl he had ever really cared for, who had promised to wait a year for him, a year's fight against the attentions of that other fellow her father wanted her to marry. Her father disapproved of Patrick, but Joan had trusted him, and now he had failed, thrown ignominiously out of his job after six months. She would be a wash-out too, that was certain. 'No, I'm damned if it is,' he cried aloud. 'I'll marry Joan yet, see if I don't!'

There was nobody to question the statement, and after a last glance at the dim green line of coast, he was about to seek a more comfortable sleeping-place when something stopped him, something he had felt vaguely without having the energy to wonder about it, that now brought back Africa more clearly than his injured head, and more agreeably. Round his neck hung a tiny leather bag attached to a silk cord. It was flat and damp with sweat, and felt cool on his chest in the breeze. As he fingered

it the events of the night before grew into a clearer sequence, and he remembered how dear old Gerald had joined him in the hotel, ostensibly to say good-bye, but in reality to share the last drop of whisky his money would run to. Gerald was also out of a job, a good fellow—all of them were good fellows so long as there was a drink to be got. Anyhow, his last African dinner had been a success from the liquid point of view, so much so that when Gerald proposed a post-prandial drive to calm its effects, he had chased away the native chauffeur and taken the wheel himself, with disastrous results to the car, his head, and a telegraph pole. The events that followed might have been a dream but for the bag he held in his hand. He had awakened with his head upon somebody's lap. Somebody's fingers were bandaging it carefully, with occasional massage-like caresses that strayed to his face and neck while a woman's voice crooned words he could not understand. Yes, it might have been a dream, but unfortunately the light of a lantern had revealed that idiot Gerald, apparently unscathed, grinning out of the darkness with the wreckage of the car piled against the telegraph pole behind him—stark reality that made his head begin to throb in spite of the deft fingers. He raised himself with difficulty and looked round. A girl knelt on the grass beside him. She was an Arab, with blue tattoo-marks on her face and big brown eyes that glistened with tears, and her lips were full and red, and the palms of her hands were red also with the dull red of henna. He stared at her and she smiled, repeating the same words over and over again, and her bangles tinkled as her little hands reached towards his head.

It was Gerald who brought him back to earth. '... Jolly fine show...' he mumbled, 'crash, bang... and then... but where the devil did *she* spring from?'

'What does she say?' asked Patrick, his eyes on the girl's eyes. 'You know the lingo.'

Gerald laughed. 'Every word of it... interpret anything. . . . She says, beautiful man—beautiful man. . . . Pat, my boy, you've smashed the car and made a conquest.'

Patrick stumbled to his feet and bent over the kneeling figure, letting his fingers stray among the smooth black hair that smelt of coco-nut oil. Now his head hurt horribly, and the upturned face was becoming blurred and indistinct. 'For God's sake, let's get out of this,' he said a little shakily. 'Thank her for me, Gerry, and . . . I wonder what her name is?'

But already the girl seemed to understand. 'Amina . . . Amina . . .' she sobbed, pointing to her breast with one henna-stained hand, while the tears coursed down her cheeks. Then, in a sudden movement of despair she tore the cord with its little bag from her neck and reached up to put it over Patrick's head, her body against his, her eyes strangely solemn. 'Grigri,' she whispered, 'Amina . . . grigri.' For a moment he took her in his arms, a moment that lasted till he found himself stumbling along the road with Gerald holding him up, and a voice wailing, 'Amina . . . grigri . . .' somewhere in the darkness.

' . . . Means her talisman,' hiccuped Gerald, ' . . . brings luck, you know . . . must have another drink. . . . '

Of how he got on board, or what became of Gerald, of the smashed car and the bill for dinner, Patrick remembered nothing. With the African coast below the horizon these things had vanished also—they didn't matter. He rose and went over to the rail, taking the cord from his neck as he did so. There was something hard in the little bag, some silly magic like all the natives wore, and he might as well be quit of it with the rest. Only the future mattered now—and the future was Joan. For a few momentous seconds Amina's grigri swung to and fro over the water, but at last he drew back. No, I won't, he thought. It's African luck, but I'll give it a chance. And he replaced it carefully under his shirt.

In an otherwise successful existence one thing had absolutely defeated James Higginson. He had never been able to fathom a woman's mind. When his wife died after twenty-four years of married life, she was still an enigma to him, and at twenty-two his daughter seemed as incomprehensible as if she had been a month old. Here was a case in point. What on earth could Joan see in a ne'er-do-well like Patrick Dale, when there was a perfectly good husband staring her in the face? His inability to answer that question exasperated him. Women's ways, was it? Well, this time he was going to put his foot down and have his way. He sat among the remains of supper, which had been utterly spoiled by all this argument, and sucked at his pipe, producing bubbling noises but no smoke, while Joan watched his efforts with an ironical smile. Her father's love for his pipe was equalled by her dislike of its disgusting vagaries, but she enjoyed seeing it get the better of him.

'If you hadn't talked so much, it wouldn't have gone out,' she said, pushing over the matches.

'Wouldn't it?' he growled back. 'Well, anyway, I've had my say. Not a penny from me if you marry that scallywag—so now you know.'

'All right, Father. You needn't repeat it. I haven't promised to marry Patrick. I only said——'

She broke off and folded up her napkin. It was no use arguing with her father, above all about Patrick. He had failed to make good and he had no money. Only the day before he had told her so himself. Her trouble was that she had listened to his explanations, though she realised they were worthless, and been thrilled by his plans for a new and wonderful future—in London this time—though she knew that planning the future was the only thing Patrick did with any certainty. Of course his plans were absurd, but oh, how wonderful he could make them seem. And he adored her—that, she felt, was genuine, if the rest wasn't. Poor Pat! In spite of everything she did like him terribly, and when he said that he would be different if only she were there to work the miracle, she believed him. But how could one live on love and plans for the future? Neither would produce money, and there was no doubt about her father's ultimatum, for he had spoken in his business voice, the voice that had built up the prosperous book shop in Conduit Street and was heard with respect in all the sale-rooms of Europe—and even in New York. She hated that voice because it was final.

Naturally there was an alternative. Her father always had one ready, and in this case the alternative was Arthur Mumby, and Joan tried hard to admit his good points. For years he had worked in the business, plodding his way up till he became buyer and prospective partner. No secrets of the book trade escaped him. At sales he showed a *flair* almost equal to his employer's, that tumbled rare editions into his hands at miraculous prices and kept the Higginson shop a bright spot when others drooped under the strain of bad times. No wonder he was also welcomed as prospective son-in-law. Things, including Joan, would be safe in his hands, for there was nothing flighty about Arthur, and if he did put on airs occasionally, small blame to him. He was good-looking enough to excuse that, and most girls would have been glad of such a chance.

These arguments were all very well, Joan reflected, and Arthur

might have made a passable husband if it hadn't been for Patrick. But in her choice neither faults nor qualities counted, for if Patrick had nothing to his credit except optimism and devotion to her, Arthur supplemented devotion by painting the joys of married life in a suburban bungalow till she could have screamed with boredom. Was there, in fact, a choice at all, now that her father had spoken his mind? If there was, it had dwindled almost to nothing, and Arthur's bungalow—with every labour-saving device—loomed larger than ever on the horizon.

Patrick's return gave the final blow to her hopes. Undaunted by her father's cold reception he had dashed into his story, brandishing explanations and promises as though they were weapons that must prevail. Africa remained appropriately vague and mysterious, a continent about which the less said the better, but he had got a job at Boyle's in Charing Cross Road that just paid for his Bloomsbury boarding-house, and better were to be found if one kept one's eyes open. Foreign adventure was done with for ever, though as a matter of fact the last failure hadn't been his fault, as the man he was with was going broke anyhow. After all, there was nowhere like London, and in London he would work his way—in the book trade like the rest of them.

'Boyle's!' scoffed Mr. Higginson. 'You'll drag them down the hill quick enough, if they don't fire you. What's your wonderful job? Watching the sixpenny books outside, I suppose?'

Patrick laughed with disarming good nature. 'Not exactly, though I wouldn't mind that to begin with, and—well, when I've learned a bit I'd like to come to you . . . if you would have me.'

He glanced at Joan for encouragement. Her heightened colour showed that she understood, but on Mr. Higginson the effect of his daring was disastrous.

'Come to me!' he gasped. 'Well, of all the damned cheek . . . a waster like you!'

'I'm not a waster,' Patrick objected hotly. 'I've been unlucky, but I mean to make good—if only Joan—'

Mr. Higginson jumped out of his chair in a towering rage.

'You can leave Joan out of it once and for all,' he shouted. 'Look here, young man, I've heard enough of your promises and your shilly-shallying, and I'll hear no more, neither for me nor my girl. Have you any money? No. Can you stick to work? No. I say you're a waster, and that's my last word. Now clear out, and be quick about it!'

Patrick clenched his fists with mortification, and left the room before further thunderbolts could scorch him. It was bad to be called waster, and worse to know that he deserved it. All the same, he wouldn't give up hope. *Joan* hadn't called him waster, and when she stole after him into the hall, the look that had so often proved irresistible was in his eyes.

'Darling,' he said, 'I know I've messed things up again, but I love you more than anything on earth. You do believe that, don't you? Give me another chance . . . just one . . .'

'How can I?' she said. 'You've let me down, Pat. You must see that, and father . . . he'll never give in. I'm as miserable as you are, but it isn't any longer a question of what we feel. It has just got to end, and it's best now.'

'Joan!' he pleaded. 'Not like this . . . we can't part like this. You must listen . . .'

'What's the good? Oh, it's all so hopeless.'

'Joan . . .'

A ringing of the bell broke in upon his pleading. With sudden decision he bent down and whispered, 'Ring me up Saturday afternoon. It's Museum 4820. You will, darling, won't you?' She shook her head and opened the door, while the number danced in her brain. Arthur Mumby stood on the threshold. For a moment the two men eyed each other in silence, till Patrick, with a supreme effort of self-control, passed by and disappeared in the staircase. Then Arthur came in and faced her. 'Look here,' he said, shutting the door abruptly, 'it's about time we settled this matter. You know what I mean . . . I can't stand seeing that chap near you any longer. Will you marry me, Joan?'

At any other time his hurt sincerity would have seemed almost tragic, but now it only made her laugh. She couldn't help it, a moment ago Patrick—now Arthur.

'You've chosen a funny place to propose,' she stammered, at a loss for a reply, ' . . . in the front hall . . .'

'What does that matter?' he interrupted. 'For ages you've kept me at arm's length because of Patrick Dale. He promised all sorts of things, didn't he? Well, now he's back, and you've seen what his promises were worth. I'm terribly in love with you, Joan—give me an answer.'

'Not now, Arthur . . . I simply can't.'

'When, then?'

'I don't know—I wish I did. To-night I'm miserable enough to hate you both.'

'I'm sorry,' he said, thawing a little. 'I'd make things happy for you, if only you would let me. I'd have a home for you, Joan, that little bungalow I've told you of . . .'

She began laughing again hysterically. ' . . . I know . . . with electric heating and gas cooking . . . and hot water everywhere, and we would talk about first editions and . . . oh, I'm sick of hearing about your little bungalow!'

Arthur had never experienced an outburst like this before. It alarmed him, though he tried to hide his fear under a dignified exterior.

'Aren't you rather unjust?' he said, wondering if such scenes had to be a part of married life. 'If you feel like that, perhaps I'd better go. All the same . . . Joan . . . we can't part like this. Come out with me on Saturday—anywhere you like. You'll have time to think it over by then, and . . . I'll wait in the shop all the afternoon. Say you will.'

Saturday afternoon! She stopped laughing and stared at him, robbed of all speech, and he turned away impatiently and disappeared in the staircase, just as Patrick had done a few minutes earlier. After all, there were limits to what a fellow could stand. He would have it out with her on Saturday—or another time if she wouldn't come then. And Joan stood alone in the hall, while doubt and hope still panicked through her mind. 'Museum 4820,' she murmured, and the words sounded like a spell.

According to Mrs. Mellin, the success of her boarding-house was entirely due to its intimacy. The air of Bloomsbury demanded intimacy, if one was to be happy in that misjudged neighbourhood. 'Get to know them and they'll stay,' she declared, referring to her guests, and in fact there was little of their history that she did not manage to discover to her own satisfaction. She watched their comings and goings from the cubby-hole that served as office behind the 'lounge,' like a benevolent spider in the centre of its web, speculating upon every change of hour, every variation of manner, till the reason came home to roost and two and two might be put together. Some people, it is true, never varied, but the frequent lapses of the majority amply compensated for their shortcomings. 'The fat and the lean,' said Mrs. Mellin, and she knew what she was talking about.

When Patrick took her cheapest room she felt that a fresh chapter of romance was beginning, especially as he had paid a week in advance without protest. 'He's at Boyle's in Charing Cross Road—a very respectable place,' she told Mr. Isaac Moon, who had been with her for five years and was therefore worthy of confidence. 'Such a nice young man, too, just like the hero of that film I saw last week—all about an island full of palms and savages and a girl with nothing on but a few beads. His name's Patrick Dale, and he's been in Africa. Mark my words, Mr. Moon, you don't get his sort without a girl somewhere about.' Mr. Moon said nothing. He was a bachelor, and never disagreed with Mrs. Mellin.

But so far as romance was concerned, the new boarder had been a disappointment. For a week Mrs. Mellin had watched in vain, and here was Saturday morning without a sign of 'the girl somewhere about.' Little did she imagine when Patrick entered the lounge at half-past twelve, what a red-letter Saturday it was to prove.

'You're early,' remarked Mr. Moon. He had a cold, and was taking the day off.

'I've been fired,' said Patrick, flinging himself into a chair. 'The damned fools. Just because . . . oh, well, it can't be helped. . . .'

Mrs. Mellin fluttered anxiously out of the office. Fired! And no reason given! Dreadful possibilities rose in her mind, but she stifled them gallantly. She didn't want *that* sort of excitement.

'What a shame,' she exclaimed. 'I do hope . . .'

'Don't worry, Mrs. Mellin,' said Patrick, smiling grimly. 'I got my week's wages all right.'

'I wasn't thinking of that, Mr. Dale.'

'I apologise, but you ought to. The money won't last long, you know. It's just my rotten old luck. I can't escape it.'

He felt that this time the end had really come. Fate was determined to keep him from Joan, and the more he wanted her the farther it drove them apart. He might as well give up going out with her that afternoon, even to say good-bye. It would only make her more unhappy, and that wasn't fair when she had stuck to him so bravely. After this nothing could help, not even the talisman he had been wearing all the time. He had completely forgotten it, and now it came back, as forgotten things often do, only to add to his trouble. Probably it wasn't good

luck at all, and he ought to have got rid of it on the ship, as he had first thought of doing. But he would now—even if it were too late. He sprang to his feet, with a sort of stubborn rage seething in his head as if he were drunk, like the night at Dar-es-Salaam when he had thrown the black chauffeur off the taxi. That had been Amina's night—with her useless grigri and her goings on! Oblivious of everything his fingers fumbled inside his collar, searching frantically for the cord while Mr. Moon stared in surprise and Mrs. Mellin emitted little chirps of horror. Then a strange thing happened. A shiver went through him, beginning at his chest and going down his body, till it ended with a kick of his right leg as a small object rolled across the carpet and came to rest at Mr. Moon's feet.

'Dear me!' exclaimed Mr. Moon, as he bent down and picked it up.

'The grigri!' Patrick gasped. '. . . It must have burst. . . .'

With a final jerk he tore the cord from his neck and held out the frayed bag. 'What is it?' he cried.

In Mr. Moon's hand lay a coin, about the size of half a crown, only thicker. It was of very dark silver, with unequal edges where the metal had overflowed from the mould, and on one side was a finely modelled chariot with four horses, while the other showed a woman's beautiful profile crowned by masses of waving hair. Patrick gazed at it stupidly. He didn't know what he had expected, but a mere coin seemed rather disappointing. On Mr. Moon, however, its effect was different.

'Well, I never . . . ' he murmured, his eyes bulging with excitement.

'What is it?' repeated Patrick. He was calmer now. Getting the thing off his body had brought a certain relief. Mr. Moon did not reply immediately. He was bending over the coin, examining every detail, touching the horses, stroking the woman's face very gently.

'Young man,' he said at last, 'unless I'm much mistaken, this is an absolutely perfect Greek medallion called the Demarete Quadriga. Up to now only one specimen was known to exist. It's in the British Museum, and the head is badly damaged. This is perfect on both sides. Where on earth did you get it?'

Once more visions of his last African night hovered in Patrick's brain, Amina's tear-stained face close to his, Gerald sitting on the grass, the smashed car. Of all that only Amina's grigri remained, and he felt that he had been unjust to Amina.

'I got it in Africa,' he answered. 'An Arab girl gave it to me.'

'I thought you were a bit of a spark,' declared Mrs. Mellin. Now that the first shock was over, she was revelling in the morning's happenings.

'Well,' continued Mr. Moon impressively, 'you've got a unique treasure there, Mr. Dale, for the British Museum specimen isn't a patch on it. I know something about coins—been in the business for twenty-five years.'

Mrs. Mellin peered over his shoulder. 'An expert, that's what he is,' she said. 'You should see the coins in his shop, rows and rows of them, gold and silver—but not like this. Oo, isn't she lovely! You'll have to give her to your best girl, Mr. Dale.'

Patrick did not answer. He was thinking profoundly. If the coin was so rare it might be worth a lot, hundreds perhaps. He held it on his palm, while absurd little castles built themselves in the air. His best girl! Mrs. Mellin could not guess how much depended upon that chariot with its four horses and that calm beautiful woman's face. Why, the money would be capital, something to start afresh with when they all thought he had nothing. Joan wouldn't refuse him then, and even her father might relent. The castles were growing—they were turning into palaces.

'What is it worth?' he asked suddenly. 'I might want to sell it. Would you buy it, Mr. Moon?'

Mr. Moon burst out laughing. 'What would you take? A hundred? Two? Three?'

'I don't know,' said Patrick, rather nonplussed.

'Of course you don't. My word, but you are simple. I believe you'd have parted with it for a fiver if I hadn't been honest. I can guarantee that medallion as genuine and perfect. My advice is to go to the British Museum. See the one there, then have yours vetted—by Spink or somebody like that—and put it into one of the big sales.'

'Wouldn't the Museum buy it?' asked Patrick, with visions of a cheque he could show Joan that very afternoon, but Mr. Moon held up his hands in horror.

'Yes, and offer you next to nothing. *They* can't afford a big price. Now, look here, Mr. Dale. I like you, or I wouldn't trouble to put you wise. Do as I say. Look at their Quadriga. Handle it to make sure of its defects, if they will let you—which isn't likely—but whatever you do, don't show yours. You want to remain a free agent—got me?'

Patrick nodded and stuffed the precious medallion into his pocket. There was not a moment to lose. 'Thank you, Mr. Moon,' he said from the door. 'You've been awfully kind.'

'Have your dinner first,' called Mrs. Mellin.

He shook his head. 'I want to get this done quickly. By the way . . . if anyone should ring up . . .'

'Yes?' said Mrs. Mellin hopefully, but he only added, 'Oh . . . it doesn't matter.' I'll be back in plenty of time, he thought.

When he was gone Mrs. Mellin sat down beside Mr. Moon. 'He's in love,' she announced, 'and I don't mind betting we'll know more before the day's out. Love's a nice thing, isn't it, Mr. Moon?'

At precisely two o'clock the bell of Mrs. Mellin's telephone gave its accustomed tinny trill. 'Hullo,' she answered, ' . . . yes, Museum 4820 . . . yes, he does . . . he's gone out, to the British Museum . . . no . . . he said it didn't matter . . . what name . . . oh, very well. That's his girl,' she concluded, putting down the receiver, 'and there's trouble brewing or I'm no judge of a voice. Better than the movies, I call it.'

Joan also put down her receiver. So he had gone out—to the British Museum . . . leaving no message, except that it didn't matter . . . after begging her to ring him up as if his happiness depended on it. In a moment her last illusions had crumbled into brutal reality. How could he care for her if he behaved like that? It just showed once again what his promises were worth. And why the British Museum? That was strange, but he probably hadn't gone there at all—and anyhow it didn't matter now where he went. 'I hate him,' she raged, lifting the receiver again. 'He's treated me shamefully . . . I'll show him how much I care . . .'

'Hullo . . . how splendid!' came Arthur's triumphant voice, ' . . . of course, Joan darling . . . I'll be round in ten minutes . . . meet you at the door . . .' He had reason to be pleased, for Joan was obviously penitent, and if he showed sufficient firmness all would be well. One had to be firm with women.

'Where shall we go?' he asked as they turned into the street. Joan had not let him kiss her, but—well—he didn't want to make a fuss at the very outset. Later, in the darkness of a cinema . . . 'There's a good film at the Plaza,' he added, 'and we could have tea . . .'

'I want to go to the British Museum,' she said.

'The British Museum?'

Joan nodded. Already there was something in her voice that challenged his vaunted firmness, but he made up his mind not to notice it. 'You're pulling my leg,' he said with uncertain gaiety. 'Let's go to a movie, Joan dear.'

'I want to go to the British Museum,' she repeated. 'I'm quite serious, Arthur.'

Vainly he stirred the embers of his will. 'It's ridiculous. Surely you don't bring me out to wander through a place like that? A funny way to treat a fellow who's in love with you!'

'The other evening you said anywhere I liked,' she retorted, 'but don't come if you don't care to. I'll go alone.'

'No, you won't,' he grumbled. 'Of course I'll come if you are so keen about it. But the British Museum . . . when I wanted to talk to you!'

'Well, we can talk there,' Joan said in a tone that held just enough hope for him to cling to. The firmness seemed to be all on her side, and Arthur groaned inwardly as he realised his defeat. What on earth could be her object, he wondered, as they crossed the museum's forecourt, where pigeons fluttered round the pillars in gay ignorance of the dead world within? Women were strange creatures, but after all, something must have brought her. Once inside the doors, Joan stood uncertain. What hope had she of finding Patrick in such a labyrinth? And if he were found, what was the good?

Only to show herself with Arthur and make him more wretched? It had been a cruel idea, unworthy of her. Poor Pat! He was out of her life for good and all, and his reasons for coming to this strange place ought not to matter—but somehow they did. She looked at Arthur, waiting in dumb annoyance. Cruelty to him did not seem so impossible.

'Come along,' she said briskly, and led the way up the great staircase. Anywhere would do for Arthur to suffer for half an hour. After that they could go, and she would dismiss the past and think only of the future. One had to face reality, and no doubt Arthur would make a good husband, and she would lead a comfortable humdrum life with a comfortable brood of children, instead of roaming the world in penury with Patrick. That was the only sensible way to look at things, though all the time she knew that in her heart something was breaking, and that beneath her

determination the truth was crying out to the statues of Assyrian kings and Hindoo gods that grinned mockingly from the walls.

At the top of the stairs a few people wandered about with sleepy interest, and Joan, after a rapid glance at them, was about to pass on, when the sound of voices made her turn. Somewhere out of sight a heated argument was in progress. People looked up, and some moved in the direction of the noise. Suddenly one of the voices rose angrily. 'I'm damned if I will,' it shouted. 'I tell you I know nothing about it.' Joan started violently. That was Patrick's voice—round that corner with 'Coin Room' marked above the door. In an instant her whole manner changed. 'Quick . . . in there!' she cried, and dragged the uncomprehending Arthur with her. At the door she paused. Patrick stood before a small show case with another man, who appeared to belong to the museum, for he wore no hat and carried a bunch of keys on a chain. The case was open—and empty.

'Well, you had it in your hand,' the man protested loudly.

'And I gave it back to you, didn't I?' cried Patrick.

'And while my back was turned and we were talking, how am I to know . . . ?'

'Let go my coat!'

The man winked at the gathering crowd. '. . . And you'll do a bunk. Not much! I'm responsible for that there Quadriga. I wish I'd never let you touch it.'

'I tell you I didn't take it,' insisted Patrick. 'The thing must have dropped down somewhere.'

'Dropped down! Go on! Haven't I looked? In a case with a single coin, too! Ah, here we are.'

A policeman, followed by a grey-haired gentleman, pushed his way into the circle. The latter turned to Patrick.

'I am the director of the Coin Department,' he announced. 'Now, what's the trouble?'

'It's quite simple,' said Patrick. 'This man was working at the case, and I asked him if I could have the coin, just for a moment, as I specially wished to examine it. At first he refused, but finally allowed me to hold it in my hand. Then I gave it back and he put it into the case. We went on talking, and when he looked round it was gone.'

The director nodded. The story sounded straightforward enough. 'Had you closed the case, Smith?' he asked the man.

Smith grew very red and flustered. 'No, sir,' he stammered.

'I know I was in the wrong, but I hadn't finished cleaning inside. I never thought there could be any danger, indeed I didn't, sir.'

'This is a very serious affair,' said the director, beckoning to the policeman. 'Of course you will both have to be searched—no, not here—in my office,' as Smith, with a look of intense relief, began to open his coat.

A sigh of disappointment went through the crowd. The man's evident innocence had robbed it of a thrill, and all eyes turned to Patrick, who stood with his hands in his pockets, visibly embarrassed. 'I won't be searched,' he declared with a defiant look at the policeman, and then, over the blue-clad shoulder he caught sight of Joan and Arthur. Till then both had watched in silent amazement, but the implication in Patrick's words roused Joan to action. 'Pat!' she cried, pushing her way forward, 'oh, Pat!' But Arthur seized her arm.

'Now are you satisfied? A nice sort of chap *he* is! A coin missing, and he won't be searched. Come away, Joan . . . you've seen for yourself.'

He had followed the scene with secret satisfaction, and the climax was beyond his wildest hopes. Here was Patrick Dale in fresh trouble, and this time it was nasty—the very lesson Joan needed.

'Pat!' she cried again, shaking herself free. 'Let them search you. Prove to them that you didn't take it!'

'I didn't take it,' he repeated doggedly, 'and I won't let them search me.' He was very white and his lips trembled, but he met Joan's reproachful gaze steadily. The director shrugged his shoulders.

'Then the police must do what is necessary. Take them to my office, constable. Lock the case, Smith. I'll send a man to examine it again.'

The policeman took control with undisguised satisfaction. Duty in the museum brought rare chances to assert his authority, and this looked like a certain arrest. He made a sign to the others to precede him, but Joan—she was sobbing now—came close to Patrick.

'Why won't you let them search you? I know you didn't do it, but this is too awful—surely you must have a reason?'

For a second he held her hand. 'Don't worry, Joan,' he whispered, 'I'm not worth it. I hoped a lot of things this afternoon, but . . . what does it matter what I hoped? Please go away, out of all this. I understand now about things having to end,

only . . . it does make it harder seeing you with *him*. Just my rotten old luck to the last. Good-bye, Joan.'

He looked away from her and passed on. She wanted to run after him, to call him back, but she didn't. She just stood there, vainly trying to stifle her sobs, while people glanced suspiciously at the girl who was mixed up in such a shady business. Arthur Mumby noted their looks with growing fury. So he had come to this horrible museum only to be disgraced and made a fool of. Joan's behaviour was scandalous, and he wouldn't stand it another instant.

'I've had enough of this,' he began. 'You've got to choose between me and that thief.'

Joan flushed. 'He's not a thief,' she said.

'Isn't he? You seem to care a lot about it.'

'Pat may have lots of faults, but he's not a thief, and you have no right to say he is.'

'Haven't I? Then why won't he be searched?'

Joan bit her lip, and her eyes filled once more with tears. If only she could answer that question!

'Well,' he stormed, exasperated by her silence, 'it needs a bit of explaining. Honest Patrick Dale! So honest that he refuses to be searched! But they'll search him right enough, and then we'll see who's honest. And there's another thing I'd like to know. What made you drag me into this?'

'What do you mean?'

'Oh, it's plain enough. You insisted upon coming here, straight to the very place where he's trying to pinch a coin. Curious coincidence, wasn't it?'

Suddenly her whole being rose in revolt. Tears were gone, and only one thing in the world mattered now. 'You mean brute,' she cried. 'So you think I knew! Well, you're right, I did know—at least I hoped he would be here because—oh, I don't care what you think—I'll never marry you, never!'

She broke away and ran along the gallery, a fleeting shadow that vanished among the treasures of the past. Were women different then, Arthur wondered? It was true he had been rather a brute, but she had goaded him on, and in the storm of contradiction he had lost his bearings. He had been fond of Joan: he had even thought he was in love with her, but now he realised that she would never have married him, and felt more annoyed than sorry. To be thrown over for Patrick was enough to annoy anyone, but what on earth had been Joan's game that afternoon?

It was an enigma he would never solve, and the knowledge rankled. Women are the limit, he mused, as he went slowly down the great staircase. Old Higginson had made that remark one evening, and he had laughed at him. He knew better now.

In spite of Patrick's apparent guilt the director of the Coin Department was puzzled. He had knowledge which, if the general public was not aware of it, must be shared by most thieves, namely that the coins in the cases were only imitations, the originals being kept safely under lock and key. On the other hand a theft, even of a worthless object, was still a theft, and this young man—who admitted having held the Quadriga just before its disappearance—refused to be searched. Then there was that girl, who had arrived with another man just at the critical moment. Perhaps he should have stopped them also, but now it was too late. Matters would soon be out of his hands, as a last appeal in the seclusion of his office had only resulted in a refusal more grimly determined than ever.

'I didn't take it,' Patrick insisted. 'I know it looks bad against me . . .' He scanned the blank faces round him and stopped. Suddenly Mr. Moon had leapt into his fickle memory, Mr. Moon, who of course could have proved his innocence from the very beginning. What a fool he was always to remember things when the damage was done! Without a doubt Joan was engaged to Arthur Mumby by now, and who could blame her? He had ruined his last hope that seemed so bright only that morning—as he ruined everything he touched—and without Joan the value of his Quadriga was useless. 'Look here,' he blurted out, 'I'll explain. You can have the beastly thing . . . I wish I'd never seen it . . . and I don't care what you do with me.'

'So you did take it!' exclaimed the policeman.

'No, I didn't. You ask Mr. Moon. He knows.'

The director raised his eyebrows. 'Mr. Moon . . . ?' But he got no further, for at that moment the door opened, and the man he had sent to examine the case hurried into the room, with Joan close upon his heels.

'It's all right, sir,' he cried in great excitement. 'I've found it, right down between the wood and the cloth. It fell out when I removed the fittings.' And he held up the medallion.

Joan stood motionless. The events of the afternoon were getting beyond her. Patrick did not dare to look at her, but her

presence made his heart thump terribly. The director broke the silence. This fellow's extraordinary behaviour was already a strain on his official calm, and here was the girl thrusting her way into his office without so much as by your leave, and the Quadriga coming back—almost in the same breath. It was more than he could stand, and he spoke with annoyance.

'Now perhaps you will tell us the reason of all this unnecessary bother. I suppose you *had* a reason, Mr.—by the way, what is your name?'

Patrick drew breath to answer. Not only had he been a fool, but he must explain his foolishness while Joan watched and listened. 'My name is Patrick Dale,' he said, 'I didn't want to be searched because I had another Quadriga in my pocket. I was afraid you would think it was yours.'

'Another Quadriga?' The director smiled incredulously. 'A fake probably. Real Quadrigas don't grow on every bush, you know. This . . . ah . . . really . . . it's almost incredible . . .'

As Patrick handed him the medallion the tone of unbelief had given way to one of amazement, and now expert eyes examined and expert fingers touched with boundless admiration. 'Absolutely flawless!' he exclaimed at last. 'Flawless—and genuine! But, Mr. Dale, if you imagined we would mistake this perfect specimen for ours, it shows how little you know. Why, it's the find of a generation. How on earth did you come by it?'

So Patrick told his story, while the pale sun fought its way through London mist to shine once more upon Amina's grigri. The director listened attentively, his eyes upon the treasure in his hand, his thoughts far away in ancient Greece. The policeman listened with resignation, as the case that had promised so well receded like a mirage into the desert of his daily round. And Joan, her lips parted eagerly, listened to the words that were building happiness out of miserable doubt. When Patrick had finished she turned to him, and he knew by her eyes that Amina had not played him false after all.

'Pat,' she whispered, 'can you forgive me? After you had gone I rang up, and they said you had left no message. I was so angry—and—I wanted to show you I didn't care. So I got Arthur—oh, it was cruel of me . . .'

Patrick laughed. 'Poor old Arthur! Will you marry me, Joan—in spite of them all? There's my fortune, you know.' And he pointed to the Quadriga.

'I'd marry you if you hadn't even that,' she said. 'I don't care what father does about it, I don't care if we starve.'

He put his arm round her with a return of the old gaiety. 'We won't starve, darling. Now that I've got you, things are bound to come right.'

The director coughed discreetly. Coins had their romance, but it was always silent and invisible, and he found a love scene in his office slightly embarrassing.

'You've had a wonderful piece of luck,' he said, 'wonderful—er—for both of you apparently. May I ask what you intend to do with your Quadriga?'

Patrick turned to Joan. 'You must decide, dearest,' he said. 'It's yours.'

'We'll sell it, of course,' she said promptly.

The director looked at her over his spectacles. 'You wouldn't care to present it to the museum?' he asked, but Patrick shook his head.

'Mr. Moon warned me about that. He knew you wouldn't offer anything for it, and—well—we rather need the money.'

'You seem to rely a lot on Mr. Moon,' said the director with a smile. 'I admit he is a great expert, but in this case his opinion happens to be wrong. The museum has been offered fifteen hundred pounds for our imperfect medallion, and would no doubt give more for yours. Still, I advise you to make a gift of it.'

'But why?' insisted Patrick.

For all reply the director went to a safe and took from it a legal-looking document, which he unfolded carefully. It contained about a dozen lines, written in a thin spidery hand, with several signatures and a seal at the bottom.

'It is extraordinary that this has happened when it did,' he said. 'A little later . . . but I'll explain. Our Demarete Quadriga was left to us nearly a century ago, by a donor who was so much in love with its beauty—he must have been a bit of a crank—that he made a bequest of five hundred pounds to whoever should present the museum with a perfect specimen within a hundred years, after which time the money was to return to his estate.'

Patrick looked up enquiringly. 'Five hundred pounds? But you said just now that yours was worth fifteen hundred.'

'Wait. You will understand in a minute. The money was well invested, and has steadily increased as time went on. Here is the date of the bequest, 30th April 1832, a hundred years ago

next Wednesday. Had you come after that—but luckily your African talisman was powerful, even in England. So you see, if you accept, the museum gets a unique gift, and you—by a miracle of chance—roughly five thousand pounds.’

For a moment it seemed as if the director’s words had fallen on deaf ears. Joan stared at the paper on the table, dazed by the suddenness of fortune. Patrick rubbed his eyes. Had Amina’s grigri really done this, or was he dreaming? ‘Five thousand pounds!’ he gasped. ‘Why, of course we accept, but—there’s no mistake, is there? It’s too wonderful.’

He bent over the paper and placed the medallion beside it, dumb links that meant so much in the chain of coincidence. Joan took his arm. ‘Now we can have a book shop of our own,’ she said softly, ‘all because of these.’

A book shop! To Patrick it sounded like a knell. The drudgery of Charing Cross Road . . . the future he feared . . . he must escape at any price, if only she would listen.

‘But Joan—a book shop—when we have five thousand pounds, and the whole world before us? Surely you can’t want to go on with that.’

A look of eager confidence was in his eyes, the look they held for every new venture, and in spite of herself Joan felt that her own reflected it. ‘I’ve got a splendid plan,’ he pleaded. ‘I hadn’t told you because it wasn’t any good without a little capital. It’s an island, away in the West Indies—and one gets a concession to grow pineapples and coco-nuts, and I know a man who makes it pay like anything. Say you’ll come, Joan darling. It would be life, not just dull existence like one has here—and we’d be so happy, and with you things simply couldn’t go wrong. Will you come, Joan . . . ?’

She listened, and somehow the pale sunlight seemed warmer, and there came a strange scent in the air, a rustling of palms, a beating of surf on a golden beach—all the wonderful things he had described a hundred times. What did it matter if they were not really like that? All along she had loved Patrick with her heart, and now her whole being longed to share his wanderlust.

‘I’ll come,’ she said.

He took her hand and laid it on his heart. ‘Your heart is beating,’ she whispered, and Patrick smiled. He was no longer afraid of the future.

'WHEN AUTHORS SLEEP . . .'

BY F. H. DORSET.

THERE was once a novelist who vivisected a soul in the cold white light of his very well-equipped literary laboratory, but an unfortunate event occurred long before he completed his task ; the thing died. He did not notice the fact at the time, because he was so intent on being neat and smart about his job, and on depicting all the poor little Soul's internal organs dispassionately in black and white, but his readers—even that section of them which, as a rule, rather liked something dead and unpleasant—turned away hastily from the result of his labours. The thing was a spiritual corpse, of interest only to the morbid who enjoy boring themselves into the grave ; although all the leading critics agreed that the work was Very Clever and full of Masterly Analysis. The public, nodding back politely at the critics, went its way and left them to it, and the Novelist, who needed both popular esteem and cash in pocket, was very much disconcerted, so much so that he called a friend into his laboratory and after showing him all the apparatus which he had used and the careful observations which he had made, asked him what on earth he thought had gone wrong.

The friend said that people liked to watch souls when they were all alive and kicking, and that the Novelist had better come out of his laboratory at once and carry his note-book about with him in the world where there were jazz bands and lively things like that. If he ran about and kept his eyes and ears open he'd soon find something really alive to write about. So the Novelist, who was chronically shy and much preferred being clever in a quiet scientific manner, swallowed hard, locked his laboratory door, and proceeded to run about. Once started he found it very difficult to stop. He saw so many things and people so fleetingly, and listened to such quantities of tinkling conversation, and swallowed such a variety of cocktails before he knew it ; played so many strenuous games, danced so many dances, and bathed on so many beaches, that he was nearly ruined. But he made any number of notes. He became a kind of Reporter to himself, and he wrote a book based on his Reporter's Notes. All the characters in it were very lively, but the queer fact remained that they were not alive. All the leading critics agreed that the work was Very Clever and

doubtless a Satire. The Public, which had recently been reading quite a lot of satire and was getting a little tired of it, once again nodded politely and went its way, looking for it knew not what, and the Novelist, who had never intended to be satirical but merely a faithful recorder of Life among the jazz bands, went and sat down in the shade to recover from the shock. He had been really clever both as dissector and reporter; everybody said so. What, then, was the matter that he could not entrance the world?

Presently he counted the money in his pocket and went away into the country to economise and think, but when he arrived there he was so extremely tired that he went to sleep, and slept, mentally, for quite a long time. The public began to forget all about him.

It was a late winter evening when he woke up properly, and found himself sitting in a shabby easy chair by a wood fire in a long, low quiet room, and discovered to his surprise that although nobody else was present he was not alone. The room was full of people about whom he had been idly dreaming in his sleep—purely imaginary people who were now curiously alive, born and separated at last from the substance of his own brain. He began to talk to them, and they crowded eagerly about him. With them he plunged into the most exciting adventures, mental, spiritual, even physical. Some of these people were pleasant and clever, some unpleasant and clever, some just averagely stupid, but their themes and lives intertwined and made an absorbing pattern, and the Novelist was far too thrilled by the sight of this either to analyse or, for the moment, report upon it. He simply sat tight in his easy chair and lived along with these exciting people, travelling the most tremendous journeys with them. When, at last, their adventures were over and they themselves sat down to rest the Novelist heaved himself out of his chair and went and seated himself on a hard bench by a deal table, where he could not again idly lapse into dreams, and there he wrote and wrote. These things had happened and the world must have the history of them. The history, unfortunately, had to be arranged and compressed into the dimensions of a reasonable book, but if he could only entice the reader to live with him inside the covers, and forget space and time in any other world, what else mattered? The Novelist became absorbed, and unconsciously he graduated from an Analyst and a Reporter into a Creator. When his book finally appeared the leading critics quarrelled among themselves about it, because it was entirely different from anything they had expected of him, but the reading

public gave a whoop and rushed down upon it, crying ' *This* is what we've been looking for when we didn't know what we wanted ! ' While reading it a number of people discovered a fresh interest in their fellow-humans, and even swallowed large doses of interesting psychological information, which the Novelist was quite unconscious of having supplied, but which on previous occasions he had laboured sorely to impart.

It is greatly to be wished that something like the above series of events would actually happen to more of our numerous novelists of to-day. Between the Vivisectionists and the Lively Reporters the ordinary reader is beginning to feel very unhappy. In a novel as well as in real life he does need to believe in people and to enjoy their society, to savour something better than irony and something more solid than sentiment. In real life actual human beings are so often periodically fantastic that even fantasy is readily forgiven in a novel if it sweeps the reader off his feet, but that never happens unless the author, too, has been spirited up on the wings of his own imagination, which will not be unless he believes in it himself; and the Vivisectionists and Reporters have no faith. They are cynics, and the moment they lay their hands upon a subject its essence vanishes from their grasp. In our efforts to escape from sentimentalism we have fallen into their clutches, and for a while discovered relief in their very cruelty or impertinence, but the relief has passed and an intense irritation is beginning to take its place. We have begun to rush, seeking comfort, for instance, into the arms of the *Good Companions*; and even to forgive extreme length and some prolixity if we can only feel the heart-warming reassurance of live human contacts, combined with genuine affection. We are terribly tired of dissected specimens on slabs of cold marble, or brilliant marionettes with hollow insides, and the reason for our dissatisfaction is that the really keen novel-reader unconsciously builds up much of his philosophy of existence from his novel-reading. He cannot help doing so, because the process is only semi-conscious, and as instinctive as that other portion of working philosophy which he constructs for himself out of his daily real life encounters. Ruling out purely adventurous or detective tales, he reads novels because he wants not merely entertainment but some fresh illumination on existence and human conduct, as revealed by a set of characters conceivably human, with their reactions to circumstances imaginably real. When clever author after clever author

persists in telling him that the truth about life is that it consists in equal parts of laboratory slush and drawing-room cynicism, his healthy instincts at last prompt him to shriek 'You lie!' and to feel that the author himself must be a bit of a pathological specimen. On the other hand, the revoltingly healthy and hearty school of fiction does not soothe him and has long lost its first charm. He knows it is little truer to life than the pathological, for the average human being is a mixture of good spiritual health with bad, and derives much of the interest of his personality from that very fact. A novel which omits either ingredient from its characters is simply a chunk of unreality, and the novel which airily denies the existence of both is even worse. It evaporates life into a nothingness from which there is no escape.

We are beginning to realise anew that the most satisfactory novels are those which contain purposeful characters and a story, such as the old Victorian novelists provided, but not treated in the Victorian manner, nor enchained by Victorian conventions. The winding up of a long story to a neat conclusion, with all its loose ends tidily tucked in, is as vexing to us as the mannerisms which continually remind us that we are reading a novel, not living a vicarious life; for our demand is more and more that fiction should reflect human existence itself, even though it be only a specialised aspect of existence, and the apparently loose ends of normal life are never wholly plaited up. On the other hand, we know by our own confused experience that life is not the amorphous mass of inconsequent events which some of our cynics would have us believe, but that it is profoundly interesting to watch what different characters make of the events which come their way and modify their lives.

Few events really arise externally from ourselves; mostly they are drawn upon us by our own actions as they cross and mingle with the actions of others, although the result may now and then land us in the most odd and alien situations. The important and exciting thing, then, is what we make of the situation and what the situation makes of us; the normal life of quite dull individuals is full of 'stories' in this sense could we discover them.

A novel may be constructed from a single episode, and frequently is. But, first of all, to be convincing and alive to the reader the folk to whom these things happen—more especially if the events are inward rather than outward—must be living and real in themselves, in other words, creations. This holds true even in 'light' fiction. P. G. Wodehouse at his best has proved the fact trium-

phantly, for his shrewd personal observation of the Goof type has resulted in the creation of the super-Goof whom we all love and who is somehow convincing even at his silliest.

In short, while observant Reporting and some capacity for Analysis of character must be part of the novelist's outfit, these things alone will not suffice. He must add to them the mysterious power of creation, and because the unalterable law of creating is that it takes time he is not likely to achieve this successfully unless he possesses a sound capacity for sitting still. Quite eighty per cent. of the characters one encounters in library fiction to-day are only half-created. They are prematurely born because the author who produced them gave himself insufficient time for quiet gestation, and it is as bad for an expectant author to rush hurriedly from one social engagement to another as it is for an expectant mother. Not only is the offspring a poorer and less vigorous creature than it should be—even perhaps a needlessly deformity—but its parent's capacity for producing sounder children subsequently is frequently destroyed. The author who is over-driven through no fault of his own into bearing such imperfect offspring is to be deeply pitied, but of how many does this hold true?

Why do certain authors whose earlier books excited us with promise of great things to come, and brought them early success, never fulfil that first promise? Why are their energies poured forth so criminally on any and every ephemeral scrap of writing or journalism which will provide them with cash on the strength of a name first acquired by better work? They are not poor—as a reasonable existence counts poverty—yet perhaps they are poor because they have become entrapped in a desperate routine of costly activity. They cannot afford to sit still mentally for more than a brief time, they cannot really 'sleep' and let the creative forces of a resting mind get to work in the far depths of their souls, in order to build up a really great work of art. Hence they are rapidly becoming no better than glorified Reporters of the external aspects of humanity, and of the half-baked thoughts of over-hurried minds. A terrible restlessness permeates their work and affects the reader like a disease. There is enough cleverness, and just enough appearance of truth, in much of their writing to entrap one into reading it, but the reading ends in unrefreshment of spirit. One is not encouraged to go on living by dwelling long in the society of their books, and ultimately what we all require and demand of every kind of Art is that it shall encourage us to go on living.

It is invidious to mention the names of existing authors who have sinned in this respect, but every novel reader during this post-war age must be able to supply certain of them for himself. Emerging from the shaking chaos of the war years, they came to us almost as angels of light—occasionally caustic angels to be sure, but oh how refreshing! Now, in so short a time, they are already jaded and babbling, trailing unused wings in the dust, dismally cocktailed, drearily divorced even in their fiction, merely marking time between eternity and eternity and sadly suggesting that this is the best which anyone can do. And yet we read their books, because fragments of their fallen angelhood still cling about them and we keep on hoping for some miracle of restoration. They can write, and there's the rub, even if they will persist in expending so much of their talent on recounting the contents of a menu or a wine list, and in describing the spiritual indigestion of individuals who have never thoroughly chewed an intellectual meal in their lives. After a course of such fiction we turn with relief to any writer, however unpretentious, who manages to offer us something more exhilarating. We feel instinctively that such a state of perpetual indigestion is too unnecessary to be really interesting, while at the same time prolonged contemplation of its spineless victims makes us feel dyspeptic ourselves. We discover that we have had no fun out of our feast, nothing to compensate us for our subsequent discomfort.

English-speaking fiction of recent years has been suffering badly from this type of authorship, but the disease is now rapidly producing its own antidote. Personally, I believe that a fresh generation of fiction, genuinely modern but bearing a strong family likeness to the full-skirted thorough Victorian novel, will shortly hold the field. Many various experiments in methods and themes of novel-writing have been gradually evolving something at once very new and very old; full-length portraits mysteriously imbued with a vitality of their own, sketches suggestive of far more than they actually portray. Presently some really new Great Master of Fiction will discover how to blend all the floating ingredients of modern life with the old grand recipe for successful novel-writing—true character, incident, and plot—in a degree which will place him among the immortals as the peculiar contribution of our present age. And ten to one he will do the marvellous thing unawares, and because he had the divine common sense to wake, and sleep, and wake again, in the company of his imaginary characters before he began his masterpiece.

AN ÆSCHYLEAN REVIVAL.

I.

THE marble slab that served for a door into Agathon's garden opened—unusual for an Athenian country-house, whose lay-out as a rule was simpler and more homestead-like—on a portico lined with marble benches, from which steps led down to the paved yard and the great holm-oak and the lawns that bordered a feeder of the young Ilissus. Flower-garden there was none; indeed, the whole area, but for the tree, might have been still in the laying-out stage, lawns and the edging shrubs and the embryo vineyards across the stream showing all freshly planted and scarcely yet well established. Seeing that it was barely a year since the last Spartan raid, which had destroyed every green thing in the garden except the holm-oak—that had an unexplained reputation for sanctity—the immaturity was perhaps natural.

The portico was empty, but on one of the benches lay a strip of papyrus which had obviously received rough handling in the near past. The writing on it was in parts undecipherable:

THE ARCHER-MAIDS, by ÆSCHYLUS

(adapted to modern tastes by Agathon, also a poet)

Final Distribution of Parts.

No further alteration will be possible.

CHORUS of ARCHER-MAIDS

ARTEMIS

Agathon son of

HUNTSMAN

CHORUS of HOUNDS

KORAX, a HOUND

Aristophanes son of Philippus

AKTAEON

Alkibiades son of Klinias

KALLISTO

Kritias . . . of Kallaeschrus.

The names of the actors had been scrawled across with a stilet, and that of Alkibiades, though it could be read, was punctured in several places.

In the shade of the holm-oak a hot discussion was going on. 'The part belongs to me,' shouted a tall, swarthy young man with grim eyebrows and an undershot jaw. 'I know something about hunting—more than any of you city dandies, anyhow. And I know a good deal about the stage; I've acted on it.'

'Had to,' retorted one of the dandies. 'You couldn't get anyone else to act the part for you.'

'Dirty cowards!' growled the tall man.

'Well if you will throw stones at wolves . . . you can't expect respectable fellow-citizens to throw the stones for you. You *are* a citizen, I suppose?'

'Wait till I start in on you, Alkibiades—and you won't have to wait long, I assure you. You and your pet sophist will make a fine pair for the next Dionysia.'

'Don't waste your characters,' retorted Alkibiades with a careless smile. 'I'm not really in the public eye yet—wait till I go into politics, and you shall have a bigger target than Kleon ever gave you. And you shan't have to wait long, either.' The other growled unintelligibly, and Alkibiades went on: 'But I'll give you one piece of advice for immediate use. Don't tackle Sokrates at all, now or at any time. You're all wrong about him, to begin with. He's not a sophist; he's a sort of demigod, the nearest thing we have to one these days. And he's popular beyond your understanding, among the very people you try to appeal to. Make fun of him on your ribald stage, and you'll find yourself at the bottom of the list.'

'Quite natural his pet should stand up for him. I'll run my own plays, thank you, and pick my own targets. That's not the question now. The point is why a man who was a huntsman first, last and all the time should be handed over to a town fop like you, when I'm ready to take the part.'

'Oh, let him have it, Aristophanes!' put in a sallow bystander with grey hairs just beginning to streak his brown headcrop. 'Aktaeon is the very part for him. He'll be torn by his own dogs before he dies, and he might as well know in advance what it feels like.'

For some reason this rasped the dandy considerably. 'Other men's dogs will tear you, Euripides! if the women don't get in first.'

'Stop that wrangling!' A young man—he looked scarcely more than a boy, and was almost beautiful enough to be a girl—came down the steps from the portico, followed by half a dozen much elder guests, one by his dress obviously a Sicilian military officer. 'Why can't you obey orders, you two? The parts are distributed, and they're going to stay as I put them. If you're discontented, Aristophanes, you can stay out of it; but I rather thought you'd like to be one of Aktaeon's hounds and tear him publicly. And understand this clearly, all of you. This play isn't

a realistic piece; Euripides hasn't laid a finger on it. It's *Æschylus* and me—mainly me.'

The name reminded him. 'Talking about *Æschylus* . . .'

'Which you've been doing nothing else but, for the last month,' interjected *Aristophanes*, still sore at his offered dismissal.

'*Euphorion* here has brought along an old friend of his, one of the last men who talked with him before his . . . accident?' *Agathon* raised an eyebrow slightly as he looked across to the Sicilian.

'So it was reported,' returned the officer gravely; 'in Sicily we never go behind the official decisions. We've had too many tyrants, and too recently, to lose the habit yet.'

'That,' put in *Euripides*, 'raises a problem that has always puzzled us over here. I wonder if you can throw light on it. *Æschylus*, as we knew him—or at any rate as we always thought of him—was an enemy of tyrants. Zeus and Xerxes and *Lykurgos*, he insisted on putting them in the wrong, quite apart from any deliberate tyranny on their part. Yet, once you get him settled in Sicily, he becomes the bosom friend first of *Hiero* and then of your own leader *Duketios*. I imagine they were among the tyrants you referred to.'

'Well, I think you must draw distinctions,' replied the Sicilian. 'At a certain stage of city-growth tyrants are a necessary evil; you've had them yourselves, and they did you a lot of good, even if they're out of date nowadays. The old fighting man saw that, I know. Again, you call him *Hiero's* bosom friend; he never was quite that, and—I say this emphatically—he never . . . what do you call it? we in Sicily call it "smoodged" . . . to *Hiero* as that pompous artist *Pindar* continually did. We soldiers had no use for *Pindar*, but we (I'm repeating what my father told me, a good deal) respected your man enormously, triple-armoured bore though he was when you got him on the tactics he was always demonstrating to us. Besides—and it's true, this, though you mayn't believe it—one of the strongest ties between him and both the other men was their rather archaic piety. They both paid their devotions to the older local gods . . . the *Paliki*, you know.'

Agathon had by this time a little over-strained the politeness due to a guest. 'Sorry to barge in,' he said, 'if I may use your own delicious lingo; but we must get this rehearsal finished to-day. You two run away and talk theology; there's a fine plane-tree across the stream. Now, *Korax*, is that bark of yours in good

order? Oh, I beg your pardon, Aristophanes; I forgot you mayn't be going on with the part.'

'Hell to your soul, you tyrantulet!'

'He growls beautifully! All right, Aktaeon, go ahead:

I know the expert flapper's flash o' the eye;
They can't deceive *me*! 'Ware my horse-sense, you!
The downcast eyes of genuine innocence . . .'

'That's the wrong place,' said Alkibiades. 'I'm nowhere there yet; I have to begin at

No day without its quarry—never yet
Came Childe Aktaeon empty-handed home.'

With that they betook themselves to business.

.
'And now,' murmured the Sicilian, when he and Euripides had settled themselves comfortably under the great plane-tree, 'tell me what it's all about. I'm a little confused. Who are they all? and what are they playing at? and, above all, why am I being dragged into it?'

'I'm not the one to ask. This is Agathon's latest diversion, and I doubt whether anyone but he could really explain what he is aiming at. Roughly speaking, I imagine he is trying to interpret Æschylus to the modern world (to use the phrase he would prefer); that is, to take a tragedy our fathers admired for their reasons, and turn it into the mixture of farce and ballet which the present generation considers the only form of theatrical art worth cultivating.'

'You astonish me. Surely the Dionysiac festival is still the unchallenged centre of theatrical art?'

'The festival isn't art—it's ceremonial. That even I, who have to write for it to maintain my reputation, admit freely. That's why private performances have become so numerous these days. If I write as I want to write, I have to throw myself on the mercy of friends for getting the play acted. If I have the Dionysia in mind, I have to patch on all manner of absurdities and invent all kinds of stupid supernatural explanations that no one believe in, and the critics call me a botcher. They're quite right; I *am* a botcher, for purposes of publication. But I can write, when I'm allowed to. . . .

'I beg your pardon. I was wandering off to my own private

grievances. You want to know what Agathon is doing, and why you're brought into it. The answer is simple. Æschylus.'

'Æschylus? But why?'

'You knew him, didn't you?'

'Knew him! No one knew him. But if any man in Sicily came nearer knowing him than I and my family did, I'll sell him my lands for an obol. Look here. I wouldn't have those silly fools across there get wind of it, but you are a poet yourself, and a family man, probably; this will show what terms we were on with him. If I'm proud of anything, it is that when I was a tiny child Æschylus wrote a lullaby verse for me. My mother used to swear he nursed me himself and sang it—but I don't believe that.'

'Yes?' Euripides half-whispered it, just to keep the memory active.

'It went like this . . .

'Gorgo, Gorgo, what are you doing?
A little cock-horse I am surely shoeing.
Where will you ride him, Gorgo, say?
Up the long hill till break of day.

I . . . I wonder why I told you. You won't repeat it, ever? I'd hate to have it laughed at.'

'Of course I won't . . . but I rather wish you'd let me tell Agathon. He wouldn't laugh; and he would value the knowledge.'

'Agathon? That girl-boy? I hate effeminacy!'

'He isn't effeminate. His looks are against him, I know. But he has more sense in that curly head than most of us greyer men. And he has a sort of devotion to our poet, different as they must have been in temperament.'

'But . . . he's making fun of him at this very minute.'

'That's not fun. It's a queer topsy-turvy sort of experiment. He reckons that Æschylus was experimenting all his life and never cared an atom for the conventionalities—and we must own that his snoring Furies were something new and a little uncanny on the grave Dionysian stage. That being so, Agathon doesn't see why. . . .'

Thræseas interrupted him. It was a distinct breach of manners, by the code of Athens, but one was always lenient with Sicilians—they had too much Doric blood in them to value politeness.

'I'm sorry, but time presses. Do tell me quickly what I really want to know. What does Agathon want of me?'

'He wants to know all you can tell him about Æschylus. There's so much we don't know. Over here he kept aloof from the men of his own kind, the poets and playwrights and the leading men in all professions but one. You might find him cheek by jowl with some old warrior, discussing the latest alterations in hoplite tactics; or you might see him drawing lines with a stick in the sand to explain to some bored boy—I'll admit I was one of them, once—how Marathon was fought. Then no one would see him at all, for weeks. And then he'd storm into town and demand a chorus and get it without any trouble. Now that isn't natural, in a great poet. Yet that was all we knew; and when these young devotees—for Agathon and his set are devotees in their own peculiar way—when they come pestering us for knowledge of him we haven't got, everybody becomes unduly annoyed. So as soon as he heard that an older Sicilian devotee was in town, nothing would suit him but that you should be fetched along to tell what you know. It's nothing to do with this fantastic play; that's merely a coincidence.'

Agathon broke in on them, panting with excitement. 'Are you telling him things?' he cried. 'That's not fair. I had the notion first—I ought to hear as soon as anyone.'

'I've been telling *him* things,' said Euripides. 'He hasn't had a chance to begin, yet.'

'I always told you you were too long-winded, old man. Come along, Thraseas; we'll find some place more comfortable than this to lie about in while you clear up the mystery for us.' And the three made their way leisurely back to the cool garden porch, now abandoned by the actors and peopled only with a few fan-bearing and drink-bringing slaves.

II.

'And now'—Agathon flung himself back on the couch and let his voice quiver with eagerness—'tell us *all* about Æschylus!'

Thraseas took his time. 'I gather from our friend here'—he gestured towards Euripides, who with eyes half-closed was really as eager as the younger poet—'that you can't understand why such a great man consorted only with old soldiers and talked nothing but battle-tactics.'

'We, and our elders of those days, could have talked over fights with him,' said Euripides. 'After all, every citizen has had his share of fighting. And we and they could have talked with him of

bigger things, too. What was at the back of the Prometheus play? What did he reckon the true worth of Achilles? for he wasn't a shoddy sentimentalist like his younger rival Sophokles.'

'Stop talking, you . . . I wish I knew a polite name for you!' Agathon was very angry. 'I can hear you talk any day. For God's sake don't interrupt again.'

Thrasedas ignored the outburst. 'All you say, Euripides, makes it easier for me to make my explanation clear. You are astonished that a master dramatist refused to discuss his dramas, and chose his company so that he needn't discuss anything but his battles. It's simple. In his own mind he wasn't a dramatist at all; he was just an old and experienced soldier. He talked about what he knew.'

'What he knew! What didn't he know? The man who wrote the *Oresteia*!'

'Exactly. But the point is that, to his own belief, he didn't write the *Oresteia*.'

'In Heaven's name, talk sense!' Agathon was sitting up, almost shouting.

'I am talking sense. I'm telling you the truth, because I pay you the compliment of believing that you'll grasp it when you give yourselves time. I'm telling you about a man who lived in our house for years off and on—whom I saw day by day when he was writing and when he was just talking soldier-shop—whom I could watch off his guard, as boys can; and who let me help him in little ways, just because I was a boy whom he could trust not to give him away. Don't you make me repent that I am giving him away unworthily after all these years.'

'Go on. You shall have nothing to repent of.'

'Right. Now I'll ask you a question. Did you ever hear rumours that he wrote when he was drunk?'

'Not in that form—we shouldn't have believed them, anyhow.'

Agathon was less positive. 'And if he had? Anything might be excused that produced the plays. And didn't he write

Brass mirrors bodies, wine reflects the soul?'

'There speaks the younger generation, Thrasedas,' put in Euripides hastily; 'be gentle with him. Take it from me, no decent Athenian ever thought Æschylus a drunkard.'

'And yet he was one . . . not in your sense, Euripides, make no mistake about that. . . . The man Æschylus never wrote, or conceived, a great play. But there were times when the god

descended upon him, took possession of him, made him drunk with inspiration, used him as a trumpet to shatter the petty silences of human intercourse. (I'm using his own talk, of course; I'm no poet.) When he came out of the "mania"—that is what he always called it—he took no credit for the work done in it; that was a divine message, nothing to do with him except that he had the duty of getting it promulgated. Did you ever know him allow any alterations?

'No. He was always fighting the priests and the choragi; and he always won. They were horribly scared, often, that some shocked elder would charge him—and them—with blasphemy.'

'Quite so. But he knew the gods couldn't blaspheme. He was responsible to them.' Thraseas lay back and pondered. 'In all the years we knew him, I can only remember one minute in which he, in a sort of way, identified himself with a play. It was his last visit, after the production of the *Oresteia*. He came up the hill from Paliké, trudging heavily, with head bowed between his shoulders. We ran out and called to him, "Welcome, Æschylus! how goes it?" He stopped a few paces away. "Call me no more Æschylus," he said; "call me *Kassandra*"—and when we stared at him, not daring to ask why, he growled: "For my shortcomings;

I failed a God; no man believes me now."

We let him go on by himself; on the threshold he turned, and threw his arms wide, and said loudly in his actor's voice (we always believed he had been an actor, once at least):

"No man believes me. It matters not—what then?
What must come, will come."

With that he turned again, and went to his own room, and we didn't see him for three days.'

'He was right,' said Euripides, after a long pause. '*Kassandra* he was.'

'What are you driving at?' Agathon didn't like mysteries that he was not admitted to.

'I heard it at the time, young as I was, and thought it a fanciful explanation. But it seems to have been true. He had felt Athens was losing its hold on reverence, and the *Oresteia* was his way of recalling her to divine things. And it failed. We marvelled at

him, and took no notice of his message. So he left us, for the last time; it may be with a broken heart.'

'Not he,' said Thraseas cheerfully. 'Didn't I tell you that was the only moment of his life in which he felt responsible for anything connected with a play? When we saw him again, after that moment, he was worrying himself violently over our Dorian phalanx; he thought it was too stiff in manœuvre, too unpliant for the hill-fighting we mostly were engaged in. He had a notion—I'm not sure something couldn't be made of it—that the best troops for our purpose would be lighter-armed, with a plaited cuirass and a smaller, rounder shield and javelin and longer dagger . . .'

'By Zeus, he hit it!' Alkibiades had come back, and for some time had been listening interestedly, but this stirred him into speech. 'Tell me, Euripides, was the old warrior ever in Thrace? I didn't think we'd begun to import peltasts in his day. But he's right—why import them? why not grow our own? They did useful work at Pylos, better work than our hoplites did; and we in their rig could do better still. Wait! I know a man who's worked out very much the same notion. You know little Timothy the cobbler down in Munychia, Agathon? plucky as they make them, but not quite up to hoplite work; he's alway wanted to be given charge of a peltast group. He shall have his chance. Thraseas, you're our friend for life. Now you just sit back and watch Timothy, and Æschylus, and me, knock some of those stiff-necked Spartan moræ into irretrievable splinters!'

Thraseas sat back as suggested, but not to watch anything. He hoped that the interruption had put an end to the talk—which was making him feel a traitor both to his Dorian kin at Sparta and to the man whom he admired and loved beyond the usage of his sober race. But he was not to be so easily let off. Alkibiades, enthusiastic over the new tactics, went off hot-foot to Munychia, but Euripides still had a question or two to ask. He too, however, was disappointed. Agathon was host, and he had his problem.

'Well, that was the old man's last-time reason for going off to Sicily. What about all the other times? He was always going off. Was he always thinking himself a Kassandra?'

If they proposed to catechise him, thought Thraseas, they should have their bellyful. 'If you ask me,' he said harshly, 'I think he hoped to preserve his self-respect.'

'What *do* you mean?'

'This. He thought of himself as a soldier, a good soldier,

worth attention on that ground. You insisted on revering him as a playwright, an honour to which he did not feel himself entitled. So he kept out of your way until the thing became unbearable, and then came away to us.'

'But surely'—Euripides was genuinely puzzled—'he might have explained his views to us instead of running away. We were his own people; we were Athenians.'

'Exactly. You were his own people; you were Athenians. And you took him all wrong. And he valued your opinion, because you were his own people. And he knew he could never convince you, because you were Athenians. You love arguing, but you hate being convinced. So he came away to us, who were not his own people, whose opinion he didn't value one obol, who would take him at his own valuation and let it go at that—I'm sorry if my Sicilianisms shock you.'

Agathon assured him he rather liked them.

'All right, then. You'll get my meaning better that way. We didn't really matter to him; he was an Athenian, too, and the same self-respect that made him avoid you made him take us for granted. So we took him for granted. We don't like arguing, and we're willing to be convinced about anything we don't think vital. Life's short enough at best. I'm talking too much now.'

'For Heaven's sake go on. This is vital.'

'What is there to go on about? He wanted to be accepted as a soldier. So we accepted him as one, and let the play-writing go hang. And everybody was comfortable.'

'No doubt. And when, to keep his—well, you seem to call it self-respect—an immortal poet, writing his own epitaph, chose to drown all his great achievements in a phrase about crop-haired Medes, I suppose you were still quite comfortable?'

Agathon was losing his temper.

'That was not our affair. If he chose to do it, no one else had any right to interfere.'

'But for your own self-respect? Does a Hellene community honour itself by neglecting to honour a great poet?'

'We honour a great poet most fittingly by respecting his wishes; that's what we feel. But . . .' Thraseas had quite lost his temper, and his self-control gave way like a broken dam. 'But I tell you this—I call all the gods to witness that his choice was hateful to me! If only he could have given way a little! let us remember that he was more than a mere soldier, however skilful!

not thrust himself always on the younger fighting men as their mentor! Youth will be patient of men who make something; but men who preach to them perpetually . . .’ He caught himself up sharply. ‘As I am preaching to you,’ he went on weakly, and shut his lips tight.

‘Nonsense!’ said Euripides. ‘You’re not preaching—go on. What was all this between him and the young soldiers? Friction?’

Thræseas almost glared at him; but all he said was: ‘That is someone else’s story. Mine is finished.’ And not another word could they get out of him, except, when he left, ‘I’ve talked too much. Good-bye.’

III.

The play was over. As Agathon had first designed it, it was to have ended in a blaze of triumph for Artemis, the outraged goddess glorying in the fate of an insolent blasphemer. This, after all, was the Æschylean ending, a stern rebuke to the *hybris* he deplored among the younger generation of his age. But Agathon was of a generation still younger, a poet to boot, and could not but refashion his material to his own unconscious liking. Artemis he had left vengeful and stormy almost to the last, but an irrepressible conviction that the vengeance was over-severe had crept into Kallisto’s story of the final tragedy (she functioned as the indispensable Messenger) and driven her to turn futilely on her mistress with reproaches that the real Artemis would have resented, but the much more real Agathon—even though they were of his own devising—could only counter with ungoddesslike excuses. As the spectators made their way in scattered groups back across the lawns, this was what they chiefly discussed.

‘For my part,’ growled Aristophanes, still in his dog’s dress but with the mask off, ‘I hate these modern concessions to weakness. I told Agathon he was growing soppy. Aktaeon deserved all he got; and I’ll admit now that I think the part was most suitably cast. Anyhow, the excuse was the weakest ever heard of . . .’ He recited a line or two ironically. . . .

‘Better that death for a hunter, run down by his pack in full cry,
Than the dragged-out, pain-racked years of the wretch Death
passes by,
Morose, sciatica-ridden . . .’

‘But that’s Æschylus himself,’ broke in a companion.

‘I don’t care if it’s Homer himself,’ retorted the Dog with a

yap; and the dispute might have developed to a quarrel but for the breaking in of a third voice—low-pitched, unemphatic, but edged with a dangerous mildness that hushed the disputants and compelled attention.

'For my part,' Sokrates said, choosing the phrase deliberately, 'I was bitterly disappointed with the ending. I sat there all through Kallisto's speech—and a fine speech it was, and our young friend Kritias gave it full effect—in the sure and certain hope (as the ancient sages phrase it) that Artemis would turn her into a bear before our eyes.'

'He'd make a good bear, would Kritias,' put in another.

'Yes, and that little flat-nosed nephew of his—Plato, they call him—is Little Bear to the life.'

'Beware of laughing at children,' Sokrates went on hastily, before this subject could shift into a dangerous quarter, 'they may grow up and turn the laugh on you. But I will confess to you, my friends, that what really enthralled me in the play was neither the goodness of Aktaeon nor the divine beauty of Artemis—though you all know how those two as a rule overwhelm me—but the virgin charm of that most delectable chorus. I could pray to Zeus to surround me always with so perfect a companionship.'

'Thanks for the hint, Sokrates,' said Aristophanes, by this time restored to good temper; 'next time I use you for a play of mine I'll see to it that you are escorted everywhere by the most poetic and ethereal chorus Athens has ever seen.' (He redeemed his promise with *The Clouds*.)

'Ware fangs, Sokrates! That dog bites when you pat him.' Alkibiades in high spirits broke into the group, dragging with him half a dozen of the chorus. But before he could embark on a new quarrel—quarrels were almost unheard of when Agathon was entertaining, but the unexpected twist of this play's ending had created an atmosphere incredibly tense; anything might happen—Agathon came down the steps, no longer the indignant or the remorseful goddess, but just the poet-artist in an unusually sulky mood. For a moment he was surrounded by excited and unobservant friends, congratulating, questioning, lamenting his change of attire. They were all on fire for the perversity of an Artemis Queen of the Revels, a virgin goddess spicing the Bacchic orgy with her virginity; after the ghastly strain of six years' hard fighting, victory had gone to the head of young Athens, and this perversity, this deliberate topsy-turviness in social relations, was

the keynote of the revulsion. The younger set had been looking forward for weeks to the banquet that should crown this night as both the culmination of the Pylos rejoicings and the final proof that their adored leader was a greater poet than the over-valued and hopelessly antiquated Æschylus. So they crowded round him, applaudive but slightly aggrieved.

Frowning and angered, Agathon thrust his way through them. 'Stop it!' He very nearly shouted the words. 'Can't you see everything's gone wrong? Leave me alone. Oh, Kritias, Kritias, you little know the mischief you've done!'

Kritias was hurt. He thought he had made quite a success of his one speech. 'I only said what you gave me to say. I tried to do my best with it.'

'You did, old man. You were splendid. That's just the trouble. You showed me up beyond all hopes of excuse. *Me*, to tamper with Æschylus!'

The outbreak for a moment stupefied everyone. Then the placid, insistent voice of Sokrates propounded an explanation. 'Our friend, candid and clear-thinking beyond the wont of poets, has discovered that Æschylus was right and he was wrong.'

'No, no, no, no, *No!*' Agathon burst out at him. 'Æschylus was *not* right. I'm right, and he's wrong! I don't care how holy Artemis was, or how vilely she had been insulted; she insulted herself more vilely by misusing her powers so revengefully. Artemis the Harpy, Artemis the Fury—it's inconceivable! I knew it all the time. I wrote it down for Kritias to spout. But when he didn't spout it at all, but just threw it at me, despising me the barbarian as an Athenian rightly despises a barbarian, no matter what it may cost him . . . Why didn't I see it first? Why couldn't I have the courage of my opinions?'

'Because Æschylus was a great poet, however wrong-headed he managed to be.'

The rest of the crowd had drifted away uncomfortably; even Sokrates, resenting a contradiction to which he was unaccustomed, had thought disappearance preferable to a discussion in which he would assuredly get the wrong answers. The speaker, the only one of them all who was Agathon's friend without being also in some sort his lover, had watched the earlier turmoil from the holm-oak's shadow, and now moved out of it at the moment when he thought he might be of use. But Agathon, sore and self-despising, would endure no consolation.

'No, Euripides, you're wrong too. Æschylus is a great poet. But it wasn't his greatness that dominated me, it was my own cheap vanity. I saw myself posing magnificent at the top of those steps, mastering the defiant rebel, hurling the thunderbolts of Zeus my father; and I couldn't resist the pose. Then my own words came flung back at me—sincere words, sincerely spoken; and I crumpled up. I'm glad the dirty little excuse was so dirty; no excuse could be stupid enough and dirty enough for the foul beast I felt myself being.'

There was no comfort for this mood, and Euripides was wise enough not to offer any. He stood to attention, so to speak, in case there was more to come; seeing that Agathon was retired within himself and had no more to say, he moved away quietly towards the house. Agathon for his part wandered aimlessly down the garden, till he found himself unexpectedly at the edge of the open plot where the performance had taken place. A vaguely seen figure on one of the benches attracted him, and he sat down heavily beside Thraseas.

The Sicilian had attended the play very unwillingly, as an act of courtesy! he knew courtesy was not expected from Dorians, and was determined to disappoint the arrogance of these Athenian youths. When the performance began, in an obvious atmosphere of merriment which Alkibiades and Aristophanes between them almost perverted to parody, he grew more and more uncomfortable, and twice half-rose from his seat to leave the place. But that, he reflected in time, would have been a more unmistakable discourtesy than non-attendance; he sat down again, and set his teeth. Then Artemis appeared, a shining virginal figure among her starry maids, yet dominant and majestic as Æschylus might himself have conceived her; and from that entrance of hers—though he was a little puzzled by Kallisto's outbreak, which seemed irreconcilable with any standards he recognized, either Æschylean or military—he remained under the spell to the end. When the rest streamed away, he sat motionless on the bench, pondering and remembering many things.

Luckily Agathon had relieved his soul to Euripides and the rest in all the words he felt capable of, and was not inwardly urged to confide in Thraseas too. He needed companionship, but at the moment preferred it silent. For quite a long time the two bent their regard, unseeing, on the warm gleaming of the marble steps that emerged from a cluster of pines far blacker than the mid-

night sky above it. Then Thraseas—prompted partly by courtesy towards his host, but far more by an instinct that the man near him was in trouble and needed help of some kind—broke the silence.

‘So the old man mastered you in the end?’

Agathon looked up, thought of a reply, thought better of it, and said nothing.

‘You could write nonsense for other young fools to speak, but yourself you couldn’t insult him.’ It occurred to him that he was being crudely Dorian and not particularly helpful; he shifted hurriedly to a new approach. ‘Candidly, I derived a very real and unexpected pleasure from your acting. I’m an old man, and not one of your kind, and words don’t come easily to me; but I owe you deep gratitude for your part in to-night’s play.’

Dragged from his own gloomy meditations by this rather uncouth but obviously sincere gratitude, Agathon took a sudden resolution.

‘You mean that?’

‘Indeed I mean it.’

‘Will you pay the debt?’

‘Show me how.’

‘Tell me how Æschylus really died.’

Thraseas sat silent.

‘Oh, I know,’ Agathon went on, after a pause, ‘you don’t think us fit to hear it; you think we’re fribbles and wasters, you won’t have your hero’s tragedy—I *know* it was a tragedy—degraded to a nine-days’ wonder for gossips. Thraseas, I’m not a waster; I too am a poet; I have proved to you to-night that I love the man as you do. For the proof of your gratitude, tell me. It shall be my secret, as it is yours.’

Thraseas stared at the dark pines, and the sky only just less dark, and made up his mind.

‘Very well,’ he said. ‘But the tale involves the honour of comrades as well as the folly of a great man. It is a grim story; I tell it to you as a mystery, that must remain inviolate.’

‘It was in one of those perpetual little hill-wars that had kept Sicily restless ever since Hiero died. Our troops had wiped out an enemy garrison, and thought the war was over, and came down to Gela to celebrate. They were a very mixed crowd just then, young adventurers and exiles gathered from every last Hellene settlement between Ionia and Massalia—Duketios had the main body of Sikeliot troops with him up north. And they were drunk, and trium-

phant, and very edgy. I wasn't there; I was up north, too; but I heard it all from my nephew, who was there and did what he could. Well, into the crowd at its edgiest strays Æschylus. He had been dining well, but not celebrating; he didn't see there was anything to celebrate about. And he began to lecture them. He told them they were fools, they had won nothing but a bit of rock, they had got themselves in a trap, in a day or two they would have lost everything again and have let down their general and disgraced their cause. They started to jeer at him in all the dialects there are, and he fired up. "I'm a man from Marathon," he shouted, "and I'm talking to men of the fighting races—Athenians and Dorians and true-bred Sikeliots, not half-breeds from Ægina and Ætolia and the western islands!" You may imagine what an uproar there was at that; and a couple of raging drunk Æginetan officers began to push their way through the crowd towards him, using horrible language. They were unarmed, of course, but a row of shields stood all along the tavern wall, gaudy with the different ensigns. Æschylus was forced back by his friends to the step that ran along the wall, with the Æginetans after him; and just as the old man seemed to have reached safety all the fire and the pride went out of him, and he caught at my nephew to support himself, and gasped. "Kassandra!" he said; "what must come . . ."

'Then the Æginetans were on him, one of them heaving up his great shield with the accursed sea-turtle on it. "If you're Kassandra," he yelled, "I'm Ægisthus," and with that he struck, and the old man went down. The next minute the brute was down, too—my nephew saw to that.'

Thrasedas stopped. There was a long silence. Then, with an effort, he finished his tale.

'That was the end, my nephew told me. Not another shout or scuffle; hardly another word. The crowd just disappeared. The other Æginetan dragged his brother's body off with him, and our man's friends—they were as aghast, and felt as guilty as the rest—heartened themselves to cover the shattered body with the shield, and left it there.'

After another long pause Thrasedas added: 'That's how stories grow.'

But Agathon said nothing. And the two sat there, silent and apart, till dawn was grey behind the pines.

ROGER MAITLAND.

BOSWELL AS ARTIST.

BY HESKETH PEARSON.

It is the commonly accepted view that Boswell's *Life of Johnson* is a model of biographical accuracy. But the fact is that Boswell was a first-class dramatist, who 'presented' various aspects of Johnson's character from a certain number of angles that appealed to him. He selected his material with the utmost care, and produced, in effect, a partial view of his subject. He was not above distorting facts, when they were at variance with the picture he wished to paint, as I shall prove later; and once, in his treatment of Oliver Goldsmith, he even allowed his jealousy to spoil his art.

His picture of Goldsmith is that of a vain, ignorant, jealous, peevish, envious, frivolous, bad-mannered wastrel. He fails to explain how Johnson not only endures such a creature but actually loves him. One is forced to the conclusion either that his portrait of Goldsmith is a grotesque caricature or that he has missed something vital in Johnson's character that made the company of a vain, ignorant, jealous, peevish, envious, frivolous, bad-mannered wastrel attractive to him. Boswell's whole tone in discussing Goldsmith is offensively patronising, which of course puts the intelligent reader on his guard and makes him read carefully between the lines. But in the meantime Truth is dodging about all over the place and Boswell is shutting one eye pretty tightly whenever it comes into view. Many instances of Bozzy's partiality could be cited, and Mrs. Thrale has given her versions of Boswell's versions of several incidents, which amount in some cases to flat contradictions.

Lockhart, the biographer who is supposed to stand second to Boswell, has an interesting reflection on the Boswellian method. He says:

'To report conversations fairly, it is a necessary prerequisite that we should be completely familiar with all the interlocutors, and understand thoroughly all their minutest relations, and points of common knowledge and common feeling, with each other. He who does not, must be perpetually in danger of misinterpreting

sportive allusions into serious statement; and the man who was only recalling, by some jocular phrase or half-phrase, to an old companion, some trivial reminiscence of their boyhood or youth, may be represented as expressing, upon some person or incident casually tabled, an opinion which he had never framed, or if he had, would never have given words to in any mixed assemblage—not even among what the world calls *friends* at his own board. In proportion as a man is witty and humorous, there will always be about him and his a widening maze and wilderness of cues and catchwords, which the uninitiated will, if they are bold enough to try interpretation, construe, ever and anon, egregiously amiss—not seldom into arrant falsity. For this one reason, to say nothing of many others, I consider no man justified in journalising what he sees and hears in a domestic circle where he is not thoroughly at home; and I think there are still higher and better reasons why he should not do so where he is.

This explains much that is unsatisfactory in Boswell's picture of the Johnson circle. But though Boswell was not an ideal biographer, he left a mine of magnificent biographical material, and he was, beyond question, a great creative artist. Mr. Bernard Shaw once informed me that Boswell 'created' Johnson much as Shakespeare created Falstaff and Hamlet. I agree, though perhaps one ought to add that there was far more of Falstaff in Shakespeare than of Johnson in Boswell, and that there was, after all, a lexicographer before his biographer.

Boswell had caught Johnson's mannerism of speech and could render it infallibly on all occasions. But it is ridiculous to suppose that Boswell made more than a cursory note or so as a basis for any lengthy conversation in his book. For one thing, note-taking on a large scale would not have been tolerated by the rest of the company. For another, Boswell was an extremely sociable man, highly responsive to the stimulus of conversation as well as wine, and had not the true reporter's detachment.

My own view is that whenever Boswell's memory failed him his imagination helped him out. He had studied Johnson so closely that he was able to *feel* how Johnson would have dealt with any given theme and how he would have expressed himself. This sort of thing is far more common than many people suppose. All good parodies are the fruit of such study. And when the subject of the study has a strongly marked and peculiar personality, as was pre-eminently the case with Johnson, you get a whole crop of Boswells, Mrs. Thrales and Fanny Burneys, each of whom can

give you, with variations that accord with their own sensibilities, the pith and marrow of their subject's eccentric genius.

What places Boswell high above the Thrales and Burneys is, firstly, his dramatic genius, and, secondly, his amazing gift for reproducing long conversations that were not merely humorous nor anecdotal nor illustrative of any especially memorable theme. It required real genius to display Johnson frequently talking at large on any subject that came up for discussion, and doing it so well that no one doubted the general accuracy of the reproduction. Johnson himself read the greater part of the *Tour to the Hebrides* and was pleased with the record of his talk—as indeed he well might be, since it was far more attractive than his own writings. And Boswell's dramatic genius was superb. No one has ever approached him in the art of describing an incident from real life; his grasp of essentials, sparseness of words and simplicity of narrative, make a scene live as vividly in the memory as anything we have ourselves witnessed.

But even as the world's greatest diarist Boswell's so-called accuracy must be spoken of with reserve. He had a definite point of view; he wanted to exhibit Johnson from certain view-points that appealed to his imagination. He suppressed and selected and enlarged with absolute freedom. It is possible, though highly improbable, that he never saw the Burney Johnson and the Thrale Johnson, but he certainly had no intention of exhibiting such a various person. It was as the eccentric and clubbable and lovable and sometimes violent philosopher that Boswell wished to preserve Johnson, and the result entitles him to the praise we usually reserve for the greatest creative artists. He must be regarded as a dramatist who depicted Johnson just as Shakespeare depicted Falstaff, from certain definite aspects; and his exceptional success must be judged, not as the success of a Lockhart is judged, but as the success of a Rabelais is judged.

By the use of letters, dates, notes, and other paraphernalia, and with the aid of an excellent memory, he was able of course to throw an atmosphere of remarkable verisimilitude over the whole work; but his real triumph was due to his creative faculty, his ability to get inside the mind of another man and reveal it in that man's own arrestingly individual style. Frequently, too, he improved upon the model and produced something more characteristically Johnsonian than Johnson.

In order to prove that Boswell was an artist, not a chronicler,

it is necessary to prove that he was capable of suppressing the truth. He did this, partly because he did not care to spoil the portrait he wished to paint, and partly because of his vanity. Johnson was *his* creation. Let anyone dispute it who dared! Intruders on his domain must be repulsed. His was the right of possession; and any view of Johnson that was not his, or did not agree with his, was wrong. Therefore he dispraised Hawkins; therefore he belittled Mrs. Thrale; therefore he selected with care and evaded or glossed over any really unpleasant aspects of his hero's character.

For, mark, there is nothing in his portrait of Johnson that really riles or nauseates the reader. In his artfully ingenuous way Boswell conveys the impression of holding nothing back, of telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. But, as a matter of fact, he was a master of evasion. The really unpleasant side of Johnson was carefully screened by this great artist in portraiture. No one could accuse him of deliberately lying. He told the truth, and nothing but the truth (as he saw it, or wished to see it), but those aspects of the truth which he disliked he either suppressed or pretended to disbelieve. By evasion the biographer can save his face; and evasion of important details is equivalent to distortion, though it usually passes for discretion. A single example, though there are dozens, will prove conclusively Boswell's artistry and mendacity.

On Wednesday, April 15, 1778, Boswell dined at Mr. Dilly's. There were present Dr. Johnson, Dr. Mayo, the Rev. Beresford, Mrs. Knowles (a famous Quakeress), and Miss Seward (the 'Swan' of Lichfield). Boswell admits that he was in 'high spirits' (i.e. inebriated) before the dinner commenced. Nevertheless he gives a long account of the conversation on that occasion—how accurately I leave any of my readers who have been drunk to guess. But it so happened that—possibly owing to his 'high spirits'—he only had a hazy recollection of a certain argument that took place between Mrs. Knowles and Dr. Johnson. So after Johnson's death he wrote to Miss Seward, who, he was aware, had made a minute of the debate at the time of its occurrence, begging her for the verbatim report of what he called 'that tremendous conversation at Dilly's.' She sent it him.

The talk centred round a certain girl named Miss Harry, who had forfeited her father's love and a hundred thousand pounds by becoming a Quaker. Johnson had been very fond of her, but

was furious when she joined the Society of Friends. One day she met him in the street and asked how he was. He cut her dead and marched scornfully by. She went home in tears and begged Mrs. Knowles to 'plead for her' when next she met Johnson. Mrs. Knowles did so, at Mr. Dilly's, as follows :

MRS. KNOWLES. I am to ask thy indulgence, Doctor, towards a gentle female to whom thou usedst to be kind, and who is uneasy in the loss of that kindness. Jenny Harry weeps at the consciousness that thou wilt not speak to her.

DR. JOHNSON. Madam, I hate the odious wench, and desire you will not talk to me about her.

MRS. KNOWLES. Yet what is her crime, Doctor ?

DR. JOHNSON. Apostasy, Madam ; apostasy from the community in which she was educated.

MRS. KNOWLES. Surely the quitting one community for another cannot be a crime, if it is done from motives of conscience. Hadst thou been educated in the Romish Church, I must suppose thou wouldst have abjured its errors, and that there would have been merit in the abjuration.

DR. JOHNSON. Madam, if I had been educated in the Roman Catholic faith, I believe I should have questioned my right to quit the religion of my fathers ; therefore, well may I hate the arrogance of a young wench, who sets herself up for a judge on theological points, and deserts the religion in whose bosom she was nurtured.

MRS. KNOWLES. She has not done so ; the name and the faith of Christians are not denied to the sectaries.

DR. JOHNSON. If the name is not, the common sense is.

MRS. KNOWLES. I will not dispute this point with thee, Doctor, at least at present ; it would carry us too far. Suppose it granted that, in the mind of a young girl, the weaker arguments appeared the strongest, her want of better judgment should excite thy pity, not thy resentment.

DR. JOHNSON. Madam, it has my anger and my contempt, and always will have them.

MRS. KNOWLES. Consider, Doctor, she must be *sincere*. Consider what a noble fortune she has sacrificed.

DR. JOHNSON. Madam, Madam, I have never taught myself to consider that the association of folly can extenuate guilt.

MRS. KNOWLES. Ah ! Doctor, we cannot rationally suppose that the Deity will not pardon a defect in judgment (supposing it should prove one) in that breast where the consideration of serving him, according to its idea, in spirit and truth, has been a preferable inducement to that of worldly interest.

DR. JOHNSON. Madam, I pretend not to set bounds to the

mercy of the Deity ; but I hate the wench, and shall ever hate her. I hate all impudence ; but the impudence of a chit's apostasy I *nauseate*.

MRS. KNOWLES. Jenny is a very gentle creature. She trembles to have offended her parent, though far removed from his presence ; she grieves to have offended her guardian, and she is sorry to have offended Dr. Johnson, whom she loved, admired and honoured.

DR. JOHNSON. Why, then, Madam, did she not consult the man whom she pretends to have loved, admired and honoured, upon her newfangled scruples ? If she had looked up to that man with any degree of the respect she professes, she would have supposed his ability to judge of fit and right at least equal to that of a raw wench just out of her primer.

MRS. KNOWLES. Ah ! Doctor, remember it was not from amongst the witty and the learned that Christ selected his disciples, and constituted the teachers of his precepts. Jenny thinks Dr. Johnson great and good, but she also thinks the gospel demands and enjoins a simpler form of worship than that of the established Church ; and that it is not in wit and eloquence to supercede the force of what appears to her a plain and regular system, which cancels all typical and mysterious ceremonies, as fruitless and even idolatrous ; and asks only obedience to its injunctions, and the ingenuous homage of a devout heart.

DR. JOHNSON. The homage of a fool's head, Madam, you should say, if you will pester me about the ridiculous wench.

MRS. KNOWLES. If thou choosest to suppose her ridiculous, thou canst not deny that she has been religious, sincere, disinterested. Canst thou believe that the gate of Heaven will be shut to the tender and pious mind, whose *first* consideration has been that of apprehended duty ?

DR. JOHNSON. Pho, pho, Madam, who says it will ?

MRS. KNOWLES. Then if Heaven shuts not its gate, shall man shut his heart ? If the Deity accept the homage of such as sincerely serve him under every form of worship, Dr. Johnson and this humble girl will, it is to be hoped, meet in a blessed eternity, whither human animosity must *not* be carried.

DR. JOHNSON. Madam, I am not fond of meeting fools anywhere ; they are detestable company, and while it is in my power to avoid conversing with them, I certainly shall exert that power ; and so you may tell the odious wench, whom you have persuaded to think herself a saint, and of whom you will, I suppose, make a preacher ; but I shall take care she does not preach to me.

At this point Boswell whispered to Miss Seward : ' I never saw this mighty lion so chafed before.'

Miss Seward, then, sent this account to Boswell, at his request. He ignored it entirely; but wrote an equivocal note in his biography, in which he declared that Mrs. Knowles had sent him a dialogue

‘which, after many years had elapsed, she wrote down as having passed between Dr. Johnson and herself at this interview. As I had not the least recollection of it, and did not find the smallest trace of it in my *Record* taken at the time, I could not in consistency with my firm regard to authenticity, insert it in my work.’

‘Firm regard to authenticity’ is good. He makes no reference whatever to Miss Seward in this note or to the minute of the conversation she made *at the time*.

Boswell’s own record of what took place reads as follows :

‘Mrs. Knowles mentioned, as a proselyte to Quakerism, Miss —, a young lady well known to Johnson, for whom he had shown much affection; while she ever had, and still retained, a great respect for him. Mrs. Knowles at the same time took an opportunity of letting him know “that the amiable young creature was sorry at finding that he was offended at her leaving the Church of England and embracing a simpler faith”; and in the gentlest and most persuasive manner, solicited his kind indulgence for what was sincerely a matter of conscience. JOHNSON (frowning very angrily). “Madam, she is an odious wench. She could not have any proper conviction that it was her duty to change her religion, which is the most important of all subjects, and should be studied with all the care and with all the helps we can get. She knew no more of the Church which she left, and that which she embraced, than she did of the difference between the Copernican and Ptolemaick systems.” MRS. KNOWLES. “She had the New Testament before her.” JOHNSON. “Madam, she could not understand the New Testament, the most difficult book in the world, for which the study of a life is required.” MRS. KNOWLES. “It is clear as to essentials.” JOHNSON. “But not as to controversial points. The heathens were easily converted, because they had nothing to give up; but we ought not, without very strong conviction indeed, to desert the religion in which we have been educated. That is the religion given you, the religion in which it may be said Providence has placed you. If you live conscientiously in that religion, you may be safe. But error is dangerous indeed, if you err when you choose a religion for yourself.” MRS. KNOWLES. “Must we then go by implicit faith?” JOHNSON. “Why, Madam, the greatest part of our knowledge is

implicit faith ; and as to religion, have we heard all that a disciple of Confucius, all that a Mahometan, can say for himself ? ” He then rose again into a passion, and attacked the young proselyte in the severest terms of reproach, so that both the ladies seemed to be much shocked.’

Now here we have the same scene recorded by two shrewd observers in entirely different language. Boswell, while ingenuously admitting Johnson’s rage, is careful not to define its manifestations. In the Seward record we have an example of bigotry in its most pernicious form. In the Boswell record we have a noble display of righteous indignation and religious emotion. I, personally, believe Miss Seward, who had no axe to grind, no hero to exalt, no villain to debase. She never for a moment thought Boswell would use her account. In a letter she wrote to Mrs. Knowles on March 27, 1785, we read this :

‘ Mr. Boswell desires I will send him the minute I made at the time of that, as he justly calls it, tremendous conversation at Dilly’s, between you and Dr. Johnson on the subject of Miss Harry’s commencing Quaker. Boswell had so often spoke to me, with regret, over the ferocious, reasonless, and unchristian violence of his idol that night, it looks impartial beyond my hopes, that he requests me to arrange it. I had omitted to send it in the first collection, from my hopelessness that Mr. Boswell would insert it in his life of the Colossus. Time may have worn away those deep-indented lines of bigot fierceness from the memory of the biographer, and the hand of affection may not be firm enough to resolve upon engraving them.”

I fancy there was more art than ‘ high spirits ’ in the Boswellian version of that ‘ tremendous conversation.’

SO SAID THE SEDAN.

BY C. E. LAWRENCE.

LADY FRANCES BELTREGE laughed through the joy of her heart as in mock majesty, mimicking a beauty of the unspacious days of Anne, she slowly descended the stairs, followed by her maid, Phyllis.

Her mother, passing below on her way to the grounds, heard the young laughter and looked up. 'Fanny!' she said, cautioning; at which the dutiful daughter laughed a little the more. Life to the happy girl in those playtime hours was an unspoiled delight. Bright spirits leapt in the invisible about her.

The week was to be memorable in the annals of Beltrege Park. The Earl and Countess, Fanny's fond parents, had lent their grounds for a Pageant, in which their daughter was to play the part of the most romantic of her collateral ancestresses—her many-times great-great-aunt Betty; who more than two hundred years before had figured in an episode—no fiction of pageantry but an affair of some violence—of which the truth could only be conjectured; and to this day there were doubts and differences as to how far her ladyship had been heroine or how far minx.

This afternoon they were to have the dress rehearsal.

Fanny, wearing some of the oldest of the family jewels, was attired after the manner of their Lady Betty as shown in the portrait in the drawing-room. She wore a long-waisted dress and farthingale of blue and saffron with ribbons in her hair and scarves of lace, making a picture of ever-young old-world loveliness—eyes ashine, face radiant—one of the things of beauty that should be a joy for ever.

Following an impulse, natural, irresistible, the moment that she had reached the bottom of those stairs she ran into the drawing-room, with its windows overlooking the Park, to compare her appearance with that of Lady Betty, in her simple and proper vanity feeling comfortably sure that over the span of the centuries the family beauty had not waned.

She went, she saw, she was satisfied.

'It's her ladyship's very self!' cried Phyllis.

'Dear idiot!' responded Fanny gratefully.

'But look, my lady, in the background, beyond her ladyship, there's a gallows with a corpse—why? and—there is Drington Church with its tall steeple. But the gallows!'

'I know! I've seen!' answered Fanny, quietly, checking her maid's emotionalism. 'But nobody ever really knew what did happen, and the gallows and the church they mean nothing.'

'I wish we knew the truth of it——'

They were interrupted by a burst of clapping from outside. Fanny ran to the window and opened a lower casement the better to look out.

Her father and mother were ascending the stairs leading to a platform on which the more favoured of the audience were to sit. The Earl raised his white hat in acknowledgment of the cheers; while her mother bobbed in her old-fashioned way. The Countess was an unrepentant Victorian, who looked even on pageants as probably not quite the things the dear Queen would altogether have approved.

The scene was attractive and amusing, through the variety of bright costumes and the many incongruities, as the actors of the various periods in their intercourse ignored the conventions of Time; Ancient Britons, wearing rough skins, familiarly consorting with plumed cavaliers, Elizabethan sea-dogs, bloods of the English Augustan Age, dandies of the inglorious Regency and Romans of Julius Cæsar. All was good fellowship, easy-going and spirited; until the Master of those Revels through his megaphone called the community to order and induced the dispersed actors to group according to their periods. It was a slow and confused process, intelligent humanity being often an obstinate sheep.

Then out of the blur of sound Fanny caught the definite note of their rector, Aloysius Wayre, raising his pulpit voice. He was standing under her window, so that she had to lean out a little way to see him; and then she drew back laughing, with the result that Phyllis also must look—and laugh. He was dressed in the silks, lace and high boots of a spurred and sworded cavalier, but held in his hands his wig and plumed beaver while wearing on his head, to protect his shining scalp from the sun, his soft felt wide-brimmed workaday clerical hat.

Fanny was interested to discover that he was describing the episode in which she was to represent her relative of long ago, who had died, as History assured them, a very sweet old maid.

Why, with all her charm and beauty, Lady Betty had remained unmarried had ever been the supreme inducement of their romantic mystery.

'Mr. Arthur's there!' whispered Phyllis.

'Be quiet!' commanded her mistress. She had seen already the rector's attractive son—the Prince Rupert of their Pageant—and was uncertain over him. A pleasant companion for a holiday hour—yes; but did he possess the moral staying-power required in a life-companion? Fanny's girlishness was not altogether unshrewd.

'It will be the same Sedan chair in use to-day,' continued the rector, 'and is it not a happy thought that the Lady Betty Beltrege of those days should be represented by the Lady Frances Beltrege of this?'

A murmur, acquiescent; the pretty daughters of belted earls being ever popular.

'She went forth in the old Sedan—though doubtless then it was new—borne by two stalwart chairmen, servants of the house, on that day wearing long cloaks. I suppose because it was a rough day, for the weather, dear friends, like the poor is ever with us.'

At that, Fanny shared the general admiration for their Aloysius, so easily and tonefully could he make the obvious sound like a new discovery.

'And then, what happened? Ah, if only Time with his remorselessness could reveal as well as destroy!' He paused, impressed by his own figure of speech; while one or two of his admirers—but they may have been merely impatient—applauded. That encouraged him. 'There are theories. I have sifted them, being a student of the history of this ancient and patrician house; and this, we believe, is what happened. Lady Betty, seated in her Sedan, had come to Drington copse, when gipsies appeared. Highwaymen, rogues and vagabonds! The chairmen fled—I fear it was so—their long coats flung off, left behind. Then the young squire, Sir Harry Chaverly, came up. To the rescue—though alone! He drew his sword gallantly, and fought. He was killed. Brutally, we might say. For his neck was broken. Wild he had been, a prodigal; but in his death he was ennobled. Lady Betty swooned. Gipsies bore her homeward. That is the end. She never married. And may we not, therefore, my dear friends, assume that she dedicated to the memory of him who had

given his life for her, the love and sorrow of her remaining years ?'

Applause greeted the sentimental ending. Fanny found herself clapping with the others, causing some of those below to look up ; followed by a doffing of hats, to which she bowed her gay acknowledgment, and then ran down the lower stairs to the waiting chair.

The Sedan, brought from the stall in the garage, once a stable, where it had slept for numberless years, was in the hall. With the rector's story in her thoughts, she studied the chair ; and then, the door at the front being open and the lid raised, sat within it ; while Phyllis arranged her skirts and gave a final critical care to her appearance.

There followed a crowding into the hall of the performers in the Belrege episode, led by the Pageant Master whose nickname was Ptolemy. The two chairmen in their long coats and three-corner hats, keeping to the tradition, put through the iron slots, set in the sides to receive them, the long poles by which the chair was carried.

'Now you all know what to do !' said Ptolemy. 'Lady Fanny, you sit still all the time. You gipsy chaps, when it comes to the fighting, make any amount of noise and clatter but take care where you hit. Be easy about it, and natural. You can now go off to the copse and wait.' They went off to the scene-painted Drington copse. 'Now when you hear the trumpet, come !' he added to the chairmen, and vanished to re-appear, a watchful critic, on the platform.

'Don't put down the lid !' begged Fanny.

'But I must, my lady,' answered the front-chairman, with the respect for her rank due from the village chemist.

'But I shan't breathe,' she protested. 'I shall faint if you do.'

'I'm sorry, your ladyship, but it must be !'

Fanny resigned herself to a quarter of an hour of close confinement and wondered how on earth the ancestors could ever have endured that stuffy inconvenience. A child of our age, her active temperament resented restraints.

This old chair ! She studied its cushioned comfort, the flowered patterns definite after the recent cleaning, and wondered at the faint patch staining the golden-padded silk under the glass at the front. The thought of Harry Chaverly flashed through her mind — 'If only you could tell,' she said to the chair—and then as it

was carried down the steps into the open—wobble, wobble, those amateurs were clumsy!—felt that she really was going to faint.

She fought against the tendency, with all her will, and kept the weakness at bay while she heard clapping and saw, as in a haze, the motley company greeting the old-fashioned prettiness; and her mother's pleased smile. Then she lapsed, lost consciousness. . . .

To find it again. She was charmed by the reality of the scene as the Sedan went evenly along. This copse was no painted fiction. It was the actual Drington copse in its summer leafiness, with birds flying in the thicket or perched on the branches. She heard the chimes trembling from the tall steeple of Drington Church, and saw the gallows set at the cross-roads. Her heart gave a leap and then was stricken cold as they approached that sinister dreadful tree, in naked horror, waiting for its ghastly fruit.

Surely that leading chairman was not their Peter! What had happened? This man was not so tall as Peter, was less stalwart; more erect, a younger figure. She tapped at the window, peremptorily, to be set down, for that uncertainty must be removed.

The chair was lowered and the bearer turned. She saw. Harry Chaverly, the young baronet, wild and weak, despicable, loose liver and spendthrift; whose face she had solidly smacked when, swollen with insolence and wine, he had tried to kiss her at the County Ball in the Assembly Rooms. He was laughing with an impudence that threatened.

'Lady Betty!' he bowed and threw off the long cloak, leaving it by the roadside. 'We now can kiss at our ease and enjoyment. And you'll be willing!' Despite his vices he made a handsome picture—a pretty rascal, as in charming insolence he smiled.

Fanny was astounded, yet her wits were alert. She lived at once in two worlds. This was a new version—doubtless the true version—of their story. She was interested by the turn it had taken and at the same time furious with Sir Harry for his intolerable effrontery. So angry was she that she felt for the inner handle of the chair-door (no longer there) to let herself out; but, freer in his movements than she, he had sprung forward and opened it.

He laughed again. On the impulse she struck him sharply in the face with her jewelled hand. He staggered back stammering oaths of filth and violence, the handsomeness fallen from him. He looked the mean bully, the gross rake, that he was. . . . And this was the hero of Aloysius! . . .

Lady Fanny was inclined to laugh, while Lady Betty remained furiously indignant.

She stepped from the chair and called, with no fear in her voice, to the footman at the back, 'Stephen!'

'Most fair and cruel!' mocked Chaverly. 'I vowed to kiss you before sunset to-day; nay, there was a wager on it, and I'll win that wager more gladly because you've struck me. A bribe and a knock on the head disposed of the footmen. But your present bearers, I assure your ladyship, are of quality. May I honour myself by introducing to you my crony and cousin, Roger Wendon?'

Despairing, Betty turned, vowing to fight like all the furies against the indignity these vile men would put on her, when a tall fellow, cloaked as Chaverly had been, strode from behind the chair.

It was not the footman Stephen.

Nor was it Roger Wendon; for Sir Harry, at sight of him, spat out a further blasphemy, and suspicious—fearful, too, it may be—whipped out the sword which had been hidden under the cloak.

The new-comer also threw aside his hat and outer garment. A powerful fellow was revealed, dark-skinned, with glistening black curly hair and flashing eyes. He wore golden earrings.

'Gipsy Dan!' cried Lady Betty, who often had seen the strange man wandering in solitude and mystery over the country-side, but never before had she spoken to him.

He raised a hand.

'Your ladyship! I saw the rascals at their villainy. Your old servant felled by a coward's blow, bound and carried to the thicket where my tribal brothers were resting. I followed.'

'Gipsy rogue!' cried Chaverly, angry and contemptuous.

'The second footman fled.'

'How did you dare?' asked the baronet.

'How did I dare? When you, Sir Harry, and your crony had donned the cloaks and I smelt the game you would be playing, I gave the call of a pheasant, and he left you and went apart to see—and came to where I was waiting. I caught him'—he smiled with the confidence of his strength, holding up his great hands—'and left him with my brothers. I took the cloak and shared your burden. I knew it was for her ladyship.' He bowed to her; no courtly bow but yet one with sincerity.

She stood as in a trance. With the blazing eyes of the gipsy upon her and hers meeting his ; they seemed locked with a great thought, mutually compelling, a sudden rich consciousness of the very close sympathy between them ; when Chaverly rushed and, before Dan could turn to defend himself, had pierced his side with the sword.

The gipsy let out a roar of anger, not of fear or pain, and sprang. Almost as if on the impulse he caught the baronet by the left wrist and with a mighty effort of body and arms, a wrench and an up-lifting, the great fellow swung him from the ground, swung him as if he were merely a weight upon a cord, swung him a full half-circle, and then let him go.

Chaverly seemed to whimper as he went. He fell to earth. His body sprawled. His head was bent awry. The neck was broken ; he was dead.

Lady Betty ran back into the chair, as a gipsy came running up.

'Soldiers !' he cried.

Dan spun round to face those enemies, for he knew they were seeking him.

'Go !' she begged. 'Dear man of my life !' she declared. Strange words from her patrician lips, but she had read the greatness of his faith and of his courage in his eyes. In their glance interlocked they had met as equals, in a mutual supreme exaltation.

But still, as in a spell of gladness, he paused ; then hurried to kneel before her, kissing her hand with his hungry heart and lips.

'Go !' she breathed. 'Soon I shall come to you.'

Stranger words yet for gipsy to receive from an earl's daughter.

'Lady love !' he cried ; and then in a giddiness, due to the loss of blood through Chaverly's savage thrust, as savagely avenged, rising to his feet he stumbled and leaned a moment against the silken panel of the Sedan, under the glass of the door, leaving there a purple stain.

'Go !' again she begged.

He recovered his wits, recognised his danger and went, running hard to the shelter of the copse. Soldiers in red coats, led by mounted men, pursued him. She heard their mocking hunting-cries as they chased him, her newly-found, lost lover, the gipsy highwayman.

In an agony of fear for him she rose to see him vanish among the trees and then fell back—into such a swoon as had befallen her many-times great-niece on this make-believe afternoon. . . .

When she awoke, the full moon was shining on Drington copse and the gallows.

She made an effort to restrain the cry which leapt from her heart, when she saw that the tree of death now bore its fruit. Gipsy Dan!

So that was the truth of their mystery!

Fanny was slowly roused by the inevitable applause. After that moving experience of true love and lost love through the long years hidden; of angry passions, treachery and death, with the right and the wrong men murdered, she found herself restored to this meagre, mock, strutting pageantry.

The chair was set down before the house and the bearers—not the gipsies of the forgotten historic truth—hastened to open the door for her and raise the lid.

'You were as still as a mouse, my lady,' said the chemist. 'I wondered for a moment if you'd fainted after all.'

Fanny breathed eagerly the fresh air. 'Was it a success?' she asked; and heard the voice of Aloysius, as ever booming and positive.

'Pretty enough but not tragical enough. I must tell Ptolemy. Would Lady Betty have remained quiet in the chair all the time, looking as if she had fainted there, while Sir Harry was killed? No. Not if she loved him, as she did.' He removed his everyday hat to put on his feathered beaver, for the Pageant Master was calling for the actors of the Cavalier episode; but with that martial majesty he yet maintained the parsonic voice. 'And, my friends, have we of this parish done all that we might to perpetuate the memory of that hero, Sir Harry? Ah, I fear not! Surely, we should put up in the church a stained-glass window, commemorating his deed, showing how gallantly he died! He laid down his life for his friend, for his love. I will consult with the Earl about it.'

Fanny roused herself to cry out, 'It was Gipsy Dan!' but important as she was then and there, nobody took notice of her; for to all but herself—who alone knew—her words were meaningless.

'Simply charming!' She heard the soft flattering voice of Arthur Wayre, as he rested his hand by the stain on the silk and bent forward, flirtatiously.

That thin spell, however, was broken. In spite of the romantic bearing, plumed hat, love-locks, sword, boots and great rowelled

spurs of this Rupert, she saw that he was weak. And the look in his eyes was a little too like that of Harry Chaverly when he had threatened to kiss.

'Thank you, Mr. Wayre,' she answered quietly; and that was the end of him.

She went again and alone to the drawing-room, and stood before the portrait of Lady Betty; studied the faded sweet face and the burden of the gallows in the background.

'Now we know the truth,' she said, 'and we shall remember. And I hope you have found happiness, dear Great-Aunt, with your Gipsy Dan!'

A SONG OF HEARTS.

LITTLE she knew who broke my heart
And carefully kept the pieces,
Sending it back in a handkerchief
Borrowed by one of her nieces.

Little she knew as I gazed on it,
Neatly riveted there,
That I felt the thing was past its prime
And really would hardly wear.

'O, don't bother,' I said to her,
'It was a very old heart,
Bound to have cracked, of course, some day,
Bound to have come apart.'

Lightly I buttoned my waistcoat on,
And paused with listening ear—
She listened too, my pretty one—
Never a beat to hear.

Old heart weary, old heart sad—
Little she knew, my sweet:
Mend an old heart as you will
You may not hear it beat.

OLIVE CLARE PRIMROSE.

*AN OBSERVANT FRENCHMAN.
ENGLAND IN 1810-11.*

BY E. V. LUCAS.

MANY books have been written by intelligent foreigners about England, just as many Englishmen and Englishwomen have written intelligent books about other nations ; but I have rarely met with a more watchful 'chiel' and social critic than Monsieur Louis Simond, who was in the United Kingdom in 1810 and 1811 and wrote an account of his travels and experiences in two large volumes, one edition in his own tongue for France, and one for England in ours. As an indication of the catholic interests of M. Simond, whose business was, I believe shipping, I may say that he describes picture galleries and prize fights ; freaks of nature (he met near Cambridge a youth measuring seven feet nine inches) and the poet Southey ; country mansions and Newgate prison ; Mary of Buttermere and Sydney Smith ; Mr. Whitbread speaking in the House ('a stout man, brisk, rather rough, with more force than taste') and Liston and Munden acting in farce. In short, all was fish that came to his net, while the illustrations, which range from the plan of his furnished house in London and a drawing of the Needles to etchings of Welsh and Scottish peasants, are from his hand, his conception of a Highlander being, by prevision, John Stuart Blackie to the life.

Monsieur Simond, whose interest in England may have partly been due to the circumstance that he had married an Englishwoman, landed at Falmouth early in 1810, travelling to London (which he felicitously describes as a giant so huge that a stranger can know little more than his feet) by way of Bodmin, Plymouth, Ivy Bridge, Exeter, Taunton, Bristol, Bath and so forth. The rate of speed, in a post-chaise, was six miles an hour—'the postboys riding instead of sitting.' He found the roads good. At Bath

'the chaise drew up in style at the White Hart. Two well-dressed footmen were ready to help us to alight, presenting an arm on each side. Then a loud bell on the stairs, and lights carried before us to an elegantly furnished sitting-room where the fire was already blazing. In a few minutes, a neat-looking chambermaid, with an ample white apron, pinned behind, came to offer her services to the

ladies and shew the bed-rooms. In less than half an hour, five powdered *gentlemen* burst into the room with three dishes &c. and two remained to wait. I give this as a sample of the best, or rather of the finest, inns. Our bill was £2 11s. sterling, dinner for three, tea, beds and breakfast. The servants have no wages, but, depending on the generosity of travellers, they find it their interest to please them. They (the servants) cost us about five shillings a-day.'

Bath he found very beautiful: 'a great monastery, inhabited by single people, particularly superannuated females. No trade, no manufactures, no occupations of any sort, except that of killing time, the most laborious of all. Half of the inhabitants do nothing, the other half supply them with nothings.'

In London, where he arrived in January, M. Simond was surprised by the absence of rich people, who, it seemed, were in the country, hunting, all through the dull cold months, and did not come to town until just when the beautiful spring was making the country attractive. There were, however, enough fashionable non-hunting people left to enable him to study their customs. Here is an excellent descriptive passage of no little value to a social historian:

'In the morning all is calm,—not a mouse stirring before ten o'clock; the shops then begin to open. Milk-women, with their pails perfectly neat, suspended at the two extremities of a yoke carefully shaped to fit the shoulders, and surrounded with small tin measures of cream, ring at every door, with reiterated pulls, to hasten the maid-servants, who come half asleep to receive a measure as big as an egg, being the allowance of a family; for it is necessary to explain that milk is not here either food or drink, but a tincture, an elixir exhibited in drops, five or six at most, in a cup of tea, morning and evening. It would be difficult to say what taste or what quality these drops may impart; but so it is; and nobody thinks of questioning the propriety of the custom.

'Not a single carriage,—not a cart—is seen passing. The first considerable stir is the drum and military music of the Guards, marching from their barracks to Hyde Park, having at their head three or four negro giants, striking high, gracefully, and strong, the resounding cymbal. About three or four o'clock the fashionable world gives some signs of life; issuing forth to pay visits, or rather leave cards at the doors of friends never seen but in the crowd of assemblies; to go to shops, see sights, or lounge in Bond Street,—an ugly inconvenient street the attractions of which it is difficult to understand.

'At five or six they return home to dress for dinner. The streets are then lighted from one end to the other, or rather edged on either side with two long lines of little brightish dots, indicative of light, but yielding in fact very little; these are the lamps. They are not suspended in the middle of the streets as at Paris, but fixed on irons eight or nine feet high, ranged along the houses. The want of reflectors is probably the cause of their giving so little light.'

There is nothing new under the sun nor under the moon, for in his rooms in Portman Square a hundred and twenty years ago M. Simond found London's night noises as difficult to bear, in days of chairs and carriages, as we do now with motor-cars and hooters. Thus :

'From six to eight the *noise* of wheels increases; it is the dinner hour. A multitude of carriages, with two eyes of flame staring in the dark before each of them, shake the pavement and the very houses, following and crossing each other at full speed. Stopping suddenly, a footman jumps down, runs to the door and lifts the heavy knocker—gives a great knock—then several smaller ones in quick succession—then with all his might—flourishing as on a drum, with an art and an air and a delicacy of touch which denote the quality, the rank, and the fortune of his master.

'For two hours, or nearly, there is a pause; at ten a *redoublement* comes on. This is the great crisis of dress, of noise, and of rapidity—a universal hubbub; a sort of uniform grinding and shaking, like that experienced in a great mill with fifty pair of stones; and, if I was not afraid of appearing to exaggerate, I should say that it came upon the ear like the fall of Niagara heard at two miles distance! This crisis continues undiminished till twelve or one o'clock; then less and less during the rest of the night,—till, at the approach of day, a single carriage is heard now and then at a great distance.

M. Simond found that London was very definitely divided into two parts :

'The trade of London is carried on in the east part of the town, called, *par excellence*, the City. The west is inhabited by people of fashion or those who wish to appear such; and the line of demarcation, north and south, runs through Soho Square. Every minute of longitude east is equal to as many degrees of gentility *minus*, or towards west, *plus*. This meridian line north and south, like that indicated by the compass, inclines west towards the north, and east towards the south, two or three points, in such a manner, as to place a certain part of Westminster on the side of fashion; the Parliament

House, Downing Street, and the Treasury, are necessarily genteel. To have a right to emigrate from east to west, it is requisite to have at least £3,000 sterling a-year; should you have less, or at least spend less, you might find yourself slighted; and £6,000 a-year would be safer. Many, indeed, have a much narrower income, who were born there; but city emigrants have not the same privileges. The legitimate people of fashion affect poverty, even, to distinguish themselves from the rich intruders. It is citizen-like to be at ease about money, and to pay readily on demand.'

As I have said, M. Simond went everywhere and he always has something pertinent to report. Here he is in the House of Commons, where he heard the debate on the ill-fated Walcheren expedition:

'The exclamation *hear! hear! hear!* so often mentioned in the reports of speeches in the newspapers, surprised me much, the effect being quite different from what I expected. A modest, genteel *hear! hear!* is first heard from one or two voices,—others join,—more and more,—*crescendo*,—till at last a wild, tumultuous, and discordant noise pervades the whole house, resembling very nearly that of a flock of frightened geese; rising and falling, ending and beginning again, as the member happens to say anything remarkable.

'Judging from the reputed taciturnity of this nation, it might be supposed that the gravity of a legislative assembly would be more particularly observable in the British Senate; instead of which, it is the merriest place that ever was. These legislators seem perpetually on the watch for a joke; and if it can be introduced in the most serious debate, it succeeds so much the better. Some of the members, Mr. Sheridan for instance, are such complete masters of the senatorial risibility, that, by a significant word or expression of countenance, they can, when they please, put their honourable colleagues in good humour. . . . English taciturnity is not proof against a sally of wit, and still less, perhaps, against a stroke of buffoonery, called here humour.'

M. Simond winds up the matter with the generalisation, 'The French are trifling and decorous, the English grave and farcical': a pronouncement which provokes thought and which I should like to examine with minuteness. This, however, is not the time; the word is with the alert M. Simond, who continues:

'This (the English) nation is probably somewhat more thinking, grave, solid, and taciturn than their neighbours on the other side of the Channel. Less, however, than is generally supposed,—for men of all countries are not extremely unlike. In the choice of their amusements, people choose naturally something very different

from their habitual state, the tedium of which they intend to relieve ; and this explains the English taste for buffoonery and broad humour.'

At one of his visits to the House M. Simond endured an all-night sitting, adjourning at half-past two a.m. to the kitchen.

'Three successive beef-steaks were broiled under our eyes, over a clear strong fire, incessantly turned, and served hot, tender, delicate, and juicy. This is a national dish, rarely good ; but under this national roof it proved excellent.'

With the steaks they drank port. I am sorry that the meal was hot. How much more valuable would have been a first-hand analysis of one of Bellamy's meat pies, such as Pitt longed for on his death-bed !

A propos the national meat, elsewhere M. Simond has a passage on John Bull as the symbolic British figure.

'This nickname, which the English have adopted for themselves, seems allusive of a certain ponderousness of body and mind, plainness and stubbornness of character, and courage deemed national ; but really that portion of the people I saw lately flying before the charge of a few horse guards, looked more like a flock of sheep, than that fierce animal.'

M. Simond was attracted by English pugilism. He saw some boxing at the Fives Court between Cribb the younger, Gully and Belcher ; he also visited Jackson's School. Jackson, he says, 'is the finest figure of a man I ever saw. I could not clasp with my two hands the upper part of his arm, when the biceps were swollen by the contraction of the limb.' John, or 'Gentleman' Jackson, who numbered Byron among his pupils, had been champion of England from 1795 to 1803 ; he was now, in 1810, forty-one. His height was five feet eleven inches, and he weighed fourteen stone. As an instance of his strength it is recorded that with an eighty-four-pound weight depending from the little finger of his right hand, he could sign his name with steadiness and clarity.

Later M. Simond saw a real prize fight. It was at Molesey Hurst, and the combatants were Tom Molineaux the negro and Rimmer of Lancashire. A huge ring of wagons and other vehicles had been formed, and, having bargained for places on a cart, the Frenchman and his companions mounted it and had a good view. Rimmer made his appearance quietly, but Molineaux arrived on

the box of a barouche and four, muffled in greatcoats and accompanied by young men of fashion.

'Here began a scene quite unexpected to me, the clearing of the ring. All the boxers in town, professional and amateurs, charged the mob at once, which, giving way in confusion, formed a sort of irregular circle outside the rope-ring, but not large enough. With sticks and whips applied *sans cérémonie* these champions of the fist pressed back the compact mass. I expected every moment a general engagement; nothing of the kind, the mob shrunk from the flogging, but without resentment. 'Tis true, the blows appeared to be directed mostly over the heads of the first ranks and fell on those five or six deep; the weapons being mostly coachmen's or carters' long whips. These rear-ranks, assailed by an invisible hand, had no resource but a retreat, and made way for those in front; the latter, squatting down on the turf, formed, at last, a sort of barrier over which the crowd could see.'

The progress of the fight, well described, I find too sanguinary to transcribe. Half-way through, it was interrupted for at least twenty minutes by the invasion of the mob, who carried stage, ropes and everything before them. Order, however, being resumed, the battle proceeded until Molineaux knocked his opponent out. 'Hats flew, cries rent the air; the black, meantime, grinning over his fallen adversary in Homeric triumph.'

It is a pity that the Frenchman's very wide interests did not extend to cricket, for, had they done so, we might have an eyewitness's account of one of the matches at Lord's in 1810: that on May 29, 30 and 31, for instance, between Lord Frederick Beauclerk's side and the Hon. E. Bligh's, when William Lambert made 132 not out and William Beldham ('Silver Billy') 52. Or the single-wicket match on July 6 and 7 between Mr. Osbaldeston ('The Squire') and Lambert as partners against Lord Frederick Beauclerk and T. C. Howard. It would be valuable to have a description of what then happened, for the match was made historic first by Mr. Osbaldeston's illness, which forced him quickly to retire; next by Lord Frederick Beauclerk's refusal to postpone; next by his refusal to allow a substitute to field; and finally by Lambert's personal triumph, for he won by 15 runs and took the whole stakes, £100. 'Lambert,' says *Scores and Biographies*, 'bowled wides purposely to Lord F. Beauclerk "in order to put him out of temper," in which he succeeded, and thus aided the match being won.' Wides at that time—and indeed till 1827—were excluded from the score.

But I am wandering far from M. Simond, who on the evening of the day on which he had seen Molineaux knock out Rimmer went to Covent Garden to hear Catalani. His description of the licence then permitted in one section of that theatre reads oddly to-day, when there is no longer such a thing as a promenade lounge in any London music hall. Here is his account of the gallery :

‘ That part of the upper region which fronts the stage is occupied by a less indecent, but more noisy, sort of people ; sailors, footmen, low tradesmen and their wives and mistresses, who enjoy themselves, drinking, whistling, howling as much as they please. These gods, for so they are called from their elevated station, which is in France denominated the *paradis*, assume the high prerogative of hurling down their thunder on both actors and spectators, in the shape of nut-shells, cores of apples, and orange-peel. This innocent amusement has always been considered in England as a sort of exuberance of liberty, of which it is well to have a little too much, to be sure that you have enough. Some persons complain even that the gods are become much too tame and tractable and like the French tenants of the *paradis*,—a good thing in itself, but a bad omen.’

On another evening M. Simond saw *Hamlet* played by John Philip Kemble, with two other of the comic actors whom Lamb has described and extolled for us—Munden and Fawcett. His account of the performance, with its defence of the English affection for comedy mixed with tragedy, is illuminating and sagacious :

‘ *Hamlet* was acted yesterday at Covent Garden, and Kemble, the reigning prince of the English stage, filled the principal part. He understands his art thoroughly, but wants spirit and nature. His manner is precise and artificial ; his voice monotonous and wooden ; his features are too large, even for the stage.

‘ Munden in the part of Polonius, and Fawcett in the grave-digger played charmingly. It is enough to mention the grave-diggers, to awaken in France the cry of rude and barbarous taste ; and, were I to say how the part is acted, it might be still worse. After beginning their labour, and breaking ground for a grave, a conversation begins between the two grave-diggers. The chief one takes off his coat, folds it carefully, and puts it by in a safe corner ; then, taking up his pick-axe, spits in his hand,—gives a stroke or two,—talks,—stops,—strips off his waistcoat, still talking,—folds it with great deliberation and nicety, and puts it with the coat,—then an under-waistcoat, still talking,—another and another. I counted seven or eight, each folded and unfolded very leisurely, in a manner always different, and with gestures faithfully copied from nature. The

British public enjoys this scene excessively, and the pantomimic variations a good actor knows how to introduce in it are sure to be vehemently applauded.

'The French admit of no such relaxation in the *dignité tragique* : "L'étroite bienséance y veut être gardée"; and Boileau did not even allow Molière to have won the prize of comedy, because he had

"Quitté pour le bouffon l'agréable et le fin
Et sans honte à Terence allié Tabarin";

much less would he or his school have approved of an alliance between tragedy and farce. Yet it may well be questioned whether the interest is best kept up by an uninterrupted display of elevation. For my part, I am inclined to think that the repose afforded by a comic episode renovates the powers of attention and of feeling, and prepares for new tragical emotions more effectually than an attempt to protract these emotions during the whole representation could have done.'

Among the curiosities of the English stage must always be ranked Master Betty, the son of a well-to-do inhabitant of Shrewsbury, who became the chief of the world's infantile phenomena. At the age of ten, in 1801, seeing Mrs. Siddons in one of her most moving parts, he vowed that he would die if he were not allowed to act too, and so determined was he that in 1803 he was on the stage. That was in Belfast, in Voltaire's *Zara*. His debut was a riot, and he continued to enchant the Irish, and even the hard-headed Scotch in Glasgow and Edinburgh: James Home, the author of *Douglas*, in which the boy played Norval, declaring that he had never seen the character properly handled before. Master Betty reached London in 1804, when he was thirteen, and, again as Norval, carried the town off its feet, bringing record sums to the exchequer of Drury Lane, and being received at Court. The House of Commons was on one occasion adjourned to give the members the opportunity of seeing him as Hamlet.

By 1810, when M. Simond saw him, a fellow-visitor to a picture gallery, Master Betty was twenty and his vogue was over. He was, in short, Mr. Betty.

'He is a great calf; ill made, knock-kneed, a pretty face, fresh, round, and rosy, without expression, or any perceivable trace of sentiment or genius. I suspect there must have been much exaggeration in the fashionable enthusiasm displayed on the occasion, as well as a great fund of bad taste. The cleverest child that ever was can at best mimic passions which he never felt; and at the

height of your fallacious raptures, merely his face and figure afford you irrefragable proofs that you are the dupe of a shallow counterfeit and perfect *mystification* of sentiment.'

After some indifferent success on the stage as a grown man, Betty left it altogether when he was thirty-four. Thereafter he lived quietly and happily, enjoying his fortune and often laughing at his early adulation, until 1874, when he died.

I mentioned Lamb just now, and, if I am peculiarly interested in M. Simond's account of the Persian ambassador, it is for an Elian connotation :

'We have here a Persian ambassador, who furnishes a good deal of conversation to the fashionable world ; the ladies love his fine black beard, his broken English, and odd good humour. His *propos* are much repeated. He complains that there are none but old women in England ; the young ones not being so much in company. He likes *embonpoint*, and exclaims : " Ah ! nice fat, nice fat ! " Of a pretty woman he said, " She is a nice little fellow." A young lady was sent to sit by him on a sofa, and talk to him ; the conversation being exhausted, and he perceiving she was tired, or being so himself, said, " Now, my dear, it is well ; you may go." . . . During the Walcheren business, he took it for granted that the heads of the ministers would be off.'

This interests me because it is the same Persian ambassador about whom Lamb used to be funny. Writing to Manning on January 2, 1810, he said : ' The Persian ambassador is the principal thing talked of now. I sent some people to see him worship the sun on Primrose Hill at half-past six in the morning, 28th November ; but he did not come, which makes me think the old fire-worshippers are a sect almost extinct in Persia. Have you trampled on the Cross yet ? The Persian ambassador's name is Shaw Ali Mirza. The common people call him Shaw Nonsense.' Among the people upon whom Lamb played his practical joke was poor George Dyer.

The scientific pundits of the Royal Institution drew M. Simond's attention no less than the Molesey Hurst bruisers, and he is interesting about its presiding genius, Mr. Davy, afterwards Sir Humphry. The Royal Institution had been founded in Albemarle Street by Count Rumford in 1799, and in 1801 Davy was engaged as a residential lecturer. He was then twenty-three, fresh from Cornwall, with the Cornish burr still on his lips, and full of enthusiasm and energy and inspiration. Gradually he won his way, not only as

an experimentalist and inventor, but as an orator. People thronged to hear him speak, almost as they had thronged to see Master Betty.

'Mr. Davy's lectures at the Royal Institution are still more crowded than they were last year, and the lecturer himself more than ever sought after by the great and the fair. It would be a matter of great regret if the allurements of science should at last prove inferior to those of fashion, and if future fame should be sacrificed to ephemeral successes. The elocution of this celebrated chemist is very different from the usual tone of men of science in England; his lectures are frequently figurative and poetical; and he is occasionally carried away by the natural tendency of his subject, and of his genius, into the depths of moral philosophy and of religion. . . . The voice and manner of Mr. Davy are rather gentle, than impressive and strong; he knows what nature has given him, and what it has withheld, and husbands his means accordingly. You may always foresee by a certain tuning or pitching of the organ of speech to a graver key, thrusting his chin into his neck, and even pulling out his cravat, when Mr. Davy is going to be eloquent—for he rarely yields to the inspiration till he is duly prepared.'

Thinking it 'incumbent upon him' to see something of the prisons of London, M. Simond went to Newgate.

'A turnkey took me up a back stair-case to the leads, from which, like Asmodeus in the *Diable Boiteux*, I had a view into the interior, and could see what was doing in the different divisions of this melancholy abode. We first perched upon the debtors' ward; they sat and walked about in two courts, paved with flag-stones, and very clean; the women separated from the men. Some of the women (they were few) held up their hands for alms. . . . Then we went to the felons under sentence of death. They were playing fives against the wall of a narrow court; their irons fastened on one leg only, from the knee to the ankle, over a sort of cushion, and so arranged as to make no noise, and to be no impediment at all to their motions; in fact a mere matter of form,—and so is also, in a great degree, the sentence of death itself. Not one of these people appeared to believe it serious. One of them, whose companions were lately executed for forgery, had been reprieved the day before, having turned evidence, and they were all playing with great briskness and glee. . . . The transportation ladies, crowded in a small court, were much more disorderly than the men. They threatened and wrangled among themselves, singing, vociferating, and, as much as the narrow space allowed, moving about in all sorts of dresses,—one of them in men's clothes. They are not in irons

like the men. In a more spacious court, separated from these women by a high wall, were state prisoners, as my guide called them, playing fives (the favourite pastime of Newgate it seems).'

I have mentioned elsewhere, in an essay on the name of Hatfield, how M. Simond saw at Newgate the would-be regicide, James Hatfield, who had fired at George III in Drury Lane theatre in 1800. In 1810 he was foreman of his prison ward at a salary of a guinea a week: 'happy as a king,' said the turnkey. Another prisoner, whose state hardly called for much pity, was the sturdy William Cobbett, the editor and proprietor of a paper which M. Simond was in the habit of reading—*The Weekly Register*—who had recently been fined £1,000 and sentenced to two years' imprisonment for an article on flogging in the Army.

'I enquired for Mr. Cobbett, expecting to see him among the gentlemen.—*Oh! no*, said my turnkey, *he is too great for that. Where is he then? Why he is in the governor's house,—I'll show you,—plenty of money, and that is everything, you know.* Then walking farther on the leads, he shewed me a grated door, through which I could see a carpeted room, Mr. Cobbett's room. He has the key of the grated door, and therefore free access to this leaden roof, which is extensive, high, and airy, with a most beautiful view of St. Paul's, and over great part of the city. His family is with him, and he continues to pour out his torrent of abuse as freely as ever, on every thing and every body in turn.'

Cobbett, as a matter of fact, had offered to discontinue his paper and thus evade punishment; but the Government or the Law Courts wouldn't have it. Could a more comic situation be imagined?

Said M. Simond:

'The freedom of the press is considered in England as the palladium of national liberty; on the other hand, the abuse of it is undoubtedly its curse. It is the only plague, somebody has said, which Moses forgot to inflict upon Egypt.'

—that was a little over a hundred and twenty years ago.

Although London was M. Simond's headquarters, he made several journeys into the country and even reached Scotland and Ireland, taking some useful introductions.

'We had the pleasure of seeing several times the celebrated Mr. Southey, a distinguished favourite of the English muses. Mr. Coleridge, whose talents are equally known, although less fruitful,

was at Mr. S.'s, with whom he has some family connection. Both of these gentlemen, and, I believe, Mr. Wordsworth, another of the poets of the lakes, had, in the warmth of their youthful days, some fifteen years ago, taken the spirited resolution of traversing the Atlantic, in order to breathe the pure air of liberty in the United States. Some accident delayed the execution of this laudable project, and gave them time to cool. At present, these gentlemen seem to think that there is no need of going so far for liberty, and that there is a reasonable allowance of it at home. Their democracy is come down to Whiggism, and may not even stop there.'

It is a calamity that Mr. Coleridge is merely mentioned: but M. Simond was not a romantic. He had far more opinions than feelings and preferred facts to fancy, so that rather than talk with the author of *The Ancient Mariner* he discussed with Mr. Southey the legend of the *Cid* and was pleased to be instructed as to a misunderstanding he had long cherished. Mention of the Frenchman occurs in a letter of Southey's in 1816, in which he comments on Monsieur S.'s 'liveliness and perverse good sense' and observes at the same time that he said that Milton's and Southey's poems had few readers, although many admirers.

It is odd and lamentable that Wordsworth does not appear on the scene at all. In Edinburgh, however, one of his friends is described: the author of the 'Waverley novels':

'We could not be at Edinburgh without wishing to see the Caledonian bard whose fertile and brilliant genius produces poems with the rapidity of thought,—and we have been gratified. Mr. Scott is a tall and stout man, thirty-five or forty years of age; very lame from some accident in his early youth. His countenance is not particularly poetical,—complexion fair, with a coarse skin,—little beard,—sandy hair,—and light eyes and eye-brows;—the *tout ensemble* rather dull and heavy. Yet when he speaks, which he is not always disposed to do, and is animated, his eye lightens up

"With all a poet's ecstasy."

This poet likes conviviality, and tells well, and *con amore*, such stories as are told here only after dinner. He is a great tory.'

On the way back from Scotland M. Simond met a remarkable man, whose identity he thinks to conceal under the initials S. S. This was, of course, Sydney Smith.

'We had the pleasure of seeing here a preacher of another sort, the Rev. S. S., who has been the delight of the devout fashionables

of the capital. It is not, however, in this character we have known him, but in his own house, where, among his friends, he is a most agreeable companion. He has the reputation of being one of the most lively writers of the *Edinburgh Review*, and serious too when he pleases. His countenance struck me as very like that of the unfortunate Louis XVI, with more vivacity in the eye.'

The next day Sydney Smith took M. Simond to the Quaker Asylum at York, the Retreat, where he made the statement that 'there was an undue proportion of tailors among mad people.' M. Simond seems to have been uncertain how to receive this information; and, indeed, he was in dangerous company. 'I would not answer,' he says, 'that this remark was to be taken seriously. The profession has a certain degree of ridicule attached to it in England, and is obnoxious to certain jokes, which, although neither very new nor very refined, genuine mirth is not so fastidious as to disdain.'

I should say that my attention was drawn to Simond's book by a scathing reference to it in one of Miss Ferrier's letters, describing it as 'a compilation of old newspapers, Travellers' Guides, Joe Miller jests, impertinent gossip and vulgar scurrility, all tacked together in the most grating disjointed style that sets our teeth on edge and makes them feel as if they were trotting on the back of a donkey.' The reader must, I think, agree with me that there is much injustice here. Simond, whom Miss Ferrier calls Simeon, is better than that; in fact, his book is singularly free from any of those defects. She attacks him for describing Glencoe as 'having fine steps with a green carpet spread upon them; that it is well swept and free from litter.' Simond's words are:

'It is a deep solitary valley, without trees, without cultivation, but of the most lively verdure, which creeps up the steep sides of the mountains on each side, interrupted by steps of terraces of black rocks, more and more frequent as the eye ascends; the green carpet spreads over each of them, till the whole is blended in the distance, or rather elevation; and the highest summits are terminated by black caps of broken rocks, frequently enveloped in heavy clouds. The haziness of the atmosphere spreads a singular softness and faintness over the whole scene. No crumbling stones, or poor fragments, littered the even surface. The lawn is swept clean and rolled, but it is by the hand of Nature, which is never trim and formal.'

'The nightingale,' Miss Ferrier continues her charge, 'he says sings in a vulgar manner.' But he qualifies the word. Here is the passage:

'We have heard here (Hertford) the nightingale for the first time in England. Fancy had embellished the faded recollection in my mind. I imagined it a long uninterrupted tale of woe, the note deep and strong, but soft, tender, and melancholy ; instead of which, it is a quick succession of strong, sharp, brisk notes. Shrill whistling occurs very often, not unlike the blackbird. There is indeed a sort of water-note, which is very beautiful, approaching what I had imagined, but it is so soon interrupted by another quite different, that you have not time to enjoy it. Upon the whole it is a lively, pleasing, vulgar sort of melody, inferior perhaps to the singing of other birds of less fame. The circumstances of night and silence, and the trite allusions of the poets, have contributed to this adventitious fame of Philomel. Contrary to what I should have supposed, the nightingale is heard to more advantage near than far off.'

That is not too bad, but for the author of *Marriage* my Frenchman could do nothing right. Alas, poor Simeon, who, as it happens, should he have had cause to mention Miss Ferrier, would have spelt it rightly, for he is not of the Gallic tradition with regard to English proper names. All the same I should like to see the copy of his book 'enriched with her marginal notes,' to which she alludes.

Let me end my quotations from this entertaining observer with a passage on books, which, were it rather better expressed, as it probably is in the French version, would take its place in any compilation devoted to the praises of reading :

'Whatever they may say, nobody talks so well or so agreeably as a book, and they would allow it themselves, in regard to their own book. Where can you find so easy and discreet a friend and companion ? You may interrupt the conversation when you please,—take a nap,—renew it again where you left it,—go back to what interests you,—skip what does not,—and shut yourself up with that friend, sure of never having more of him than you like. This consciousness of safety is inestimable. To judge of it, consider only with what avidity the printed letters of eminent persons are read, and reflect on the dread and consternation the sight of these same letters in the original manuscript would have produced ;—just drawn from the pocket of the person to whom they were written, and about to be read to you in confidence !'

Mr. Simond, I might add, died at Geneva in 1831.

TÜBINGEN.

A FOOTNOTE.

THE 'famous and magnificent'—the epithets are Professor Saintsbury's—apostrophe to Oxford at the close of the Preface to *Essays in Criticism: First Series*, is still familiar to a generation which is forgetting why Wragg was in custody and how society hastened to Philistia. Let us rehearse it here for the sake of the poet in Matthew Arnold, who, like his own scholar-gipsy, 'came to Oxford and his friends no more.'

'Beautiful city! so venerable, so lovely, so unravaged by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene!

"There are our young barbarians, all at play!"

'And yet, steeped in sentiment as she lies, spreading her gardens to the moonlight, and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age, who will deny that Oxford, by her ineffable charm, keeps ever calling us nearer to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection—to beauty, in a word, which is only truth seen from another side?—nearer, perhaps, than all the science of Tübingen.'

And then followed the jewelled phrases, 'home of lost causes, and forsaken beliefs, and unpopular names, and impossible loyalties,' and the exaltation of Oxford as our saviour from the increasing bondage of *das Gemeine*.

The echo from Keats is worth noticing, for the union of beauty with truth is the one thing which Arnold selected for supreme praise in the essay on Keats which he wrote fifteen years later for Humphry Ward's *English Poets*. But the word which arrests attention in a passage where every word was carefully chosen is Tübingen—'the science of Tübingen.' Why, we ask, make a journey to Württemberg, when all the science of evolution was contained in the *Origin of Species*, then a recent book at home, and what was the special contribution of Tübingen to the new thought?

This Preface was written in 1865, six years after Darwin's challenge. Matthew Arnold was moving steadily in those years

from literature to dogma. The essays in criticism, for which the Preface was composed, had all been published in various magazines (including chiefly CORNHILL), and the article on 'Culture and its Enemies,' which appeared in July, 1867, afforded a clear indication of the development in its author's mind. It shunted the train of the *Essays* on to the line of *Culture and Anarchy*, 1869, and *Literature and Dogma*, 1873. For Arnold was tending at this time to become the prophet and crusader, the lesser Swift and Carlyle, instead of the critic and poet. He is perhaps, though it is not material to our present purpose, less permanently interesting in that phase, though he was temporarily much more popular, and it behoved him, accordingly, to keep himself brightly abreast with foreign speculation in theology. No English prophet could acquire a halo without reflection from a German shrine. The leading oracle at the date was Ferdinand Baur, Professor of Theology in the University of Tübingen, who had been appointed to his chair as early as 1826. Born in 1792, he had died in 1860, after establishing in that ancient seat of learning, founded in 1477, what was already known as the New School of Theology. His *Kirchengeschichte* in five volumes, completed by his son and Zeller, his son-in-law, was published between 1853 and 1863, and the teachings of the School, under the influence of Schleiermacher and Hegel, supplied much sustenance to Arnold's prophecies as they were beginning to be formulated when he penned the Preface to his *Essays*. 'Religion,' Schleiermacher had written, 'should float about human life like a sweet and pleasant melody, a vague but beneficent presentment of a life of dreams in which the human soul can find felicity.' It had a touch of the sweetness and light which Arnold was desirating for his countrymen. It was a tune which could facilitate the transition of the critic to the prophet, of the author of *Essays in Criticism* to the author of *Culture and Anarchy*, and Kuno Francke vouches for the 'development from the contemplative analysis of a man like Schleiermacher to the constructive criticism of a Ferdinand Baur or a David Friedrich Strauss.' To Ferdinand Baur in Tübingen, accordingly, Arnold went for his 'science.'

If, and we need hardly doubt it, we are correct in identifying this far-fetched 'science of Tübingen' with the theological teachings of Professor Baur, the associations of that city may be worth pursuing a little further. They can be pursued in two directions, both before Arnold and after him. Possibly, in using the name in opposition to 'the last enchantments of the Middle Age,' he was as

unaware of the one as he must have been of the other. Yet the past had some importance to 'culture' in Matthew Arnold's sense. For Tübingen, we remember, went Reform about 1530, partly under the stimulus of the lectures of the great scholar known as Melanchthon (1497-1560), who, though he preceded Baur by just three hundred years, yet seems a very close colleague. Melanchthon, properly Philip Schwartzerd (the Greek name being a translation of the German, *schwarze Erde*, black earth), was a grand-nephew of the great Reuchlin, who died in 1522, and whose services to the Reform which Melanchthon was preaching at Tübingen are, of course, a matter of common knowledge. What is sometimes forgotten, however, is that Reuchlin, a year before his death, was himself a teacher at Tübingen. The University, then less than fifty years old, had honoured itself by appointing him to a chair of Hebrew and Greek, probably founded *ad hoc*; for Hebrew and Greek were the Reformers' languages of the Old and New Testaments, which Luther was rendering into homely German in the face of the opposition of Rome. Reuchlin—the story in a thrice-told tale—at the instance of an apostate Hebrew and of the Dominicans at Cologne, had drawn down the thunder of the Church for stirring the dust of Hebrew books; and the refuge found for him at Tübingen, where he was set free to expound the guarded tongues, anticipated in the sixteenth century the School of Theology in the nineteenth. There was a like release from 'the Middle Age.' But the mediæval tradition at the earlier date was borne not in 'whispers of enchantment' but in the hisses and grunts conveyed by the contemporary satire of the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*,—the obscurantists who were the Philistines of Reuchlin's day. Then 'the German universities,' we read,¹ 'had become the stronghold of bigotry and intolerance, and in them the Faculty of Theology was ever the dominating keep.' 'Nearer, perhaps,' wrote Matthew Arnold. There was more virtue in the *perhaps* than he knew or than he cared to break his rhetoric to tell. For 'the science of Tübingen' was called in to correct the theological bias which would have estopped the progress of Reform, and three centuries afterwards the new School of Theology at Tübingen raised the same standard of revolt against 'the last enchantments of the Middle Age.'

One word more, a little more fancifully. In the memoir of the Head of an Oxford College which I wrote for Mr. Murray the other

¹ In the Introduction to F. Griffin Stokes's edition of the *Epistolæ*; London 1909.

day,¹ we read of the first meeting at Balliol in 1872 between Alfred Viscount Milner and Sir Herbert Warren. Milner 'always stuck in Warren's memory as the tall slender candidate in that examination, wearing "a sort of long, dark student's coat, and a tall hat or very foreign-looking bowler." This impression of foreignness was derived not only from his dress, or from something more pensive and serious in his mien than was usual with lads of his age, but also, as Warren discovered next term, from the facts of Milner's education and upbringing.' He had been born at Bonn and had gone to school in Tübingen between 1866 and 1870, where his father was lecturer at the University. 'Thus, he knew many things which the English schoolboy and undergraduate did not know—not only the German language, but some German approaches to learning. He had never "done" Latin verse composition, but he could read Teuffel's *Roman Literature* in the original, and Teuffel was a Professor at Tübingen.' It was the science of Tübingen once more distinguished from the medieval heritage, and the distinction was drawn in Oxford itself some years after and quite independently of the Oxford-Tübingen contrast in Arnold's Preface. When we remember Milner's part at Doullens in the crisis of the Great War, we may ask if the scientific mind which planned Germany's defeat was not partly acquired from German sources.

But Matthew Arnold's journey to Tübingen must not lead us too far. The thread of the science in its keeping may be traced almost from the foundation of its university at the end of the fifteenth century, and Arnold's selection of the epithet was very happily inspired.

LAURIE MAGNUS.

¹ Herbert Warren, 1853-1930: *President and Friend*. London, 1932.

AN ERROR IN DIAGNOSIS.

BY L. E. ARTHUR.

THE hall of the Royal College of Surgeons was alive with candidates waiting to hear the result of their final examination. Everyone stood about in groups, talking shop, exchanging gossip, and generally trying to pretend that the result they were awaiting so anxiously was a matter of indifference to them. The stony gentlemen, pioneers of the profession, who stood here and there round the walls, stared unsympathetically from chilly pedestals at their would-be followers.

To Margaret Spending, as to many others, the hall had grown sinister from previous agonising waits of this sort. She could not pretend she did not care, and cast frequent and anxious glances up the broad, deserted staircase where the official always appeared with the fateful announcement.

The groups shifted restlessly, breaking up and re-forming as people wandered aimlessly about.

'Fifth, and last, time for me, I swear,' snorted a pallid youth, fingering a mouse-coloured growth which struggled for supremacy with the pimples on his upper lip. 'Damned if I won't take to professional spillikins if I'm ploughed this time. D'you know what that mangy old devil, Bursby, said to me in the last Viva?' He plunged into trackless medical obscurities, and his audience melted away, one by one.

Margaret thought enviously of the days when, as a child, she had been wont to let off steam by yelling into a pillow. She yearned for a pillow now.

'What tempted us to try and do medicine?' she wailed to a friend beside her.

'Dunno,' was the reply, 'but what does it matter? Anyway, we're alive, and, personally, I'm grateful to be running the gamut of the emotions like this. It's grand experience.'

'My poor girl, you're wasted in medicine. A novelist of the modern school is what you—Hullo! Now we're for it.'

A hush fell upon the hall, as an official, with stately unconcern, dawdled down the stairs, and, taking up his position facing the crowd, began to read the list.

'Number 2617,' he called. 'Number 2618, 2619, 2620.'

A file of candidates walked past him to a passage, whence, after a brief interview with another official, they either proceeded excitedly upstairs to be formally admitted Members of the College, or, receiving a pink slip which informed them that the Board of Examiners regretted . . . , returned to the hall to see how the rest fared.

‘Number 2643.’

Margaret marched up to the second official, and held out her hand for the dreaded ‘pink.’ The man smiled at her.

‘Not this time, miss,’ he said. ‘Matter of fact, I did ‘appen to see your marks, and ‘ave much pleasure to inform you as you was second of the ‘ole bunch. Up the stairs, miss, if *you* please.’

Margaret walked unsteadily up the narrow side-stairs where, on two previous occasions, she had enviously watched elated backs disappearing. At the top she was wafted, as in a dream, into a long room filled with delightful people, who beamed largely at her and at each other. Margaret made for the window, and beheld her husband, Adrian, standing on the opposite pavement of Lincoln’s Inn Fields, his back towards her, and his attention fixed, apparently, on the public tennis courts beyond the railings. While she was still gazing at him in the futile hope that he would turn round and see her, a deep voice boomed close behind her.

‘Ladies and gentlemen,’ it began, and Margaret span round to find that the Great Men, so recently faced in anguish across a table laden with bottles of pickled mystery, were in the room, and proposing to admit her to their high priesthood. Of the solemn address which followed she heard very little. It was mercifully brief, examiners being as keen as their victims to get away. A perfunctory handshaking between the two ended the proceedings, and Margaret, with the rest, walked downstairs—the front stairs this time—to the big hall. There she made a long nose at the haughtiest of the pioneers, and then snatched hat and coat from the cloak-room, cramming them on anyhow as she ran down the steps and made a bee-line for Adrian’s broad back.

He turned round before she could reach him.

‘I’m through,’ she announced unnecessarily, thrusting her arm into his, and leading him away. ‘Qualified. Can you believe it? I can’t. Oh, darling! aren’t you glad now that I decided to take finals in spite of marrying you? And one of the men told me,’ she went on breathlessly, giving him no time to reply, ‘that I was second on the list—of everyone. Not that that’s anything to gloat

about, seeing as how this is my third shot. Still, it's pleasant to know one hasn't just scraped through. Let's wire to my aged parents.'

They made for the Southampton Row post office, Margaret breaking irrepressibly into skips every few yards, and talking all the time.

Outside the Holborn Restaurant she stopped in the middle of the crowded pavement.

'Adrian, I've only just remembered. Must we go to that dance of the Coxboroughs' to-night? Couldn't we cut it, and celebrate somewhere by ourselves?'

While parties of newly released clerks and typists divided to get round them, and men immersed in the latest murder bumped angrily against them and shouldered past without apology, Adrian fumbled in his coat. After a search which increased in anxiety as pocket after pocket was investigated in vain, he ran his quarry to earth in a remote cranny of his note-case.

'I didn't like to do anything about to-night,' he said, handing Margaret two theatre tickets, 'but I thought you might like these for to-morrow. Also, a table will be reserved for us at Romozoff's. Will you dine with me?'

Margaret pranced.

'Now I can enjoy even the Coxboroughs' crush. It'll probably be necessary to mew and spit a good deal in order to, and' (mindful of her husband's kindly habits) 'I won't have you dishing out any charity to spoil the fun.'

The supper room was half-full when, a few hours later, Adrian and Margaret sought to appease hunger and thirst at the palace (to which they ungratefully referred as a 'pub') where the worthy Coxboroughs were entertaining their guests. No small table remained empty, so the two chose a larger one which afforded a good view of the room, and looked as exclusive as possible.

'It's no good,' grumbled Adrian. 'In this squash we're bound to be invaded.'

'Never mind.' Margaret laughed as she looked at his rueful face. 'Perhaps a society beauty or one of my predecessors in your affections—there are several here, aren't there?—will come and console you.'

Adrian paid no attention to her. He was looking round for a waiter who might be bribed to remove the spare places. But before he had espied one, Margaret was tugging at his sleeve.

'Too late,' she murmured. 'Behold our fate! Play up!'

A chubby young man, with pink cheeks and yellow hair, was bearing down upon them, holding by the hand an extremely pretty, docile-looking girl.

As he came up, 'May we join you?' he asked, in the confident tones of one expecting a delighted affirmative in reply. 'You look as if you'd like more company, and we definitely need cheering. Come on, Angela.'

Before Adrian, glowering, had finished muttering the conventional politenesses, the girl had been pushed into a chair next to him, and the young man had seated himself in the remaining one.

'You see,' he burst out, 'we've come with two newly married couples, and really they are too frightfully boring. Spend all the time looking into each other's eyes, and all that sort of rot—as if they couldn't spoon at home all day if they want to. Makes me sick to see 'em. Bah!'

Margaret pressed a high heel on Adrian's foot, and, slipping off her rings, thrust them into his reluctant hand under the table.

'I always wonder,' said she, with the air of one uttering untold profundities, 'how people get married at all. The connubial life sounds to me just awful. Don't you agree?' appealing to Adrian.

'Oh, hell!'

'Exactly. You've said it. Think of having to face the same person at every meal—especially breakfast—every day for life. Think of—'

'Angela and I just couldn't stick them, could we, Gelly?' The young man, pursuing his own train of thought, interrupted Margaret before she had warmed to her theme.

'They have scores of silly little jokes together, which aren't in the least funny, and they giggle and flutter as if— Ugh! They make me sick. They used to be quite good value, too, before they went soft. I used to ask them to my house parties, but I'm hanged if I will again. They'd create a blight.'

'Won't you make the poor things duller still if you exclude them from your bright revels?' suggested Adrian mildly.

The chubby one looked concerned, and replied gravely:

'I suppose I shall, but I can't help that. There's no room for duds at my place. I spend my time trying to ginger up the poor old county, and it's hard enough as it is, with all the merry chaps about. However, we're not doing so badly. I think I've taught

some of the older inhabitants a thing or two about parties already. Angela can tell you my place would never do for married kill-joys.'

'Marvellous!' murmured the dutiful Angela, speaking for the first time.

Margaret was all eager attention, and turned towards the young man, inviting confidences.

'Do tell me all about your place,' she begged softly.

Her large eyes were fixed upon her victim, who, despite his complacency, was obviously flattered. He glanced at her appreciatively, and, nothing loath, launched into his life-history. Margaret, nibbling game salmis, listened, rapt, while he told of his father's death, which had forced him to resign his commission in a crack cavalry regiment and take charge of big estates; of his mother and sisters, necessary but slightly inferior beings; of his enthusiasm for and promise at polo. Every moment he became more confidential, encouraged by his listener's adulatory comments.

Adrian, feverishly discussing cabbages and kings with the decorative but otherwise uninspiring Angela, noted with concern a gleam in his wife's eye as she shot a glance at him, and quailed for fear of what it might portend. Adrian heard the young man describing, with a wealth of detail, the celebrations at his coming of age. 'Awful binge, my dear. Would you believe it? After the dance we played hunt the slipper till daylight—awful rag.' Then, temporarily exhausted, he attacked his neglected supper.

Margaret expressed such delighted interest in all she heard that she received and accepted a warm invitation to a 'little do I'm having next month.' Then, avoiding her husband's eye as carefully as he avoided hers, she looked round the room in search of fresh entertainment.

'Yes, we are a pretty sorry crowd, aren't we?' said Adrian. 'Soggy respectability leavened inadequately with a few freaks. Look at that woman, for instance.'

He jerked a rude thumb towards a long, angular female with a colourless Eton crop, a face to match, a beige dress, and a monocle. The pink young man surveyed her with disgust.

'Oughtn't to be loose,' he pronounced. 'Isn't she nauseating? Must be a lady doctor, I should think.'

Adrian began to smile, but again his foot suffered under his wife's high heel, as she said sweetly: 'What makes you say she must be a doctor?' (She could not bring herself to insert the odious word 'lady.') 'D'you know any such curiosities?'

'No, thank God,' replied the young man, pulling a face.

'But you think you'd recognise one if you saw it?'

'Think? I *know* I should—by sight, probably, but by smell, anyway. They all stink of ether and disinfectant muck—bound to. hateful job, I think. Not fit for women. No decent girl would dream of doing it; only foredoomed spinsters like Sarah over there.'

'Imagine one of you two doing it!' Adrian looked from his wife to the girl, Angela, and laughed aloud. Margaret joined in thankfully, and the others laughed too, doubtfully at first, then with increasing vigour till the table rocked and neighbouring parties glared at the noisy offenders.

The four became sober at last, finished their ices, and rose all together.

'May I have this dance?' The cherubic one's tone was confident as he turned to Margaret. She eyed him thoughtfully. Had he but known it, his fate hung at that moment in the balance. Unluckily for him, she caught him exchanging a complacent glance with his own reflection in a neighbouring mirror. His doom was sealed.

'I'm not sure,' she replied. 'You might detect the characteristic odour which has hitherto miraculously eluded you. You see, you've failed somehow to recognise by sight, so I gather you're bound to by——'

The young man's jaw had dropped. Now he gave vent to a mighty gasp, and sat down. The pink of his smooth cheeks gradually deepened, and spread all over his face and down his neck, as he stared incredulously at Margaret.

'D'you mean to say . . .,' he began. Then: 'Oh, rot! It's impossible. You're pulling my leg.'

Margaret took the giggling Angela by the arm and moved off in search of a cloakroom.

The young man transferred his stare of enquiry to Adrian, who grinned and nodded emphatically.

'She is,' he said. 'She really is. But only since this afternoon. Don't worry. I'm sure that's why you failed to spot the stench. It hasn't had time to develop properly yet.'

The young man, limp and deflated, mopped his brow as he rose.

'My God!' he ejaculated. The Deity, inured to such appeals, offered no help. Then, overcome afresh by doubts, the young man burst out again: 'I can't believe it. The thing's absurd. Why, that girl's marvellous. Her frock's a dream. All right, all right.

I'll take your word for it. But to think she's a *doctor*.' (From his tone he might as well have said 'dustman.') 'I say, you know, I shall wake up sweating at night about this for months. D'you think she'll ever forgive me? I must go and ask her.'

He set off in pursuit of her distant form, but after a few steps changed his mind and stopped short.

'No, I really haven't the nerve to face her. I must get away from here. Be a good fellow, and bring Angela along to the entrance hall as soon as you can get hold of her. I'll wait there.'

He disappeared, and in due course Adrian made contact with his wife and the girl Angela.

'Only to think,' the latter was saying, 'of this happening to Bubbles, of all people. Won't everyone just scream, when they hear!'

Margaret laid a hand on her arm.

'That's where I want your help,' she said. 'I've been pretty unkind to your poor "Bubbles," and I don't want the tale to go any further. Promise?'

'He wants you to join him in the hall and go on somewhere with him,' broke in her husband, addressing Angela. 'I think he's had nearly as much as he can stand for one night and needs comforting, so be extra nice to him. Shall I take you along?'

She and Margaret exchanged farewells, and Adrian led her to the entrance.

'Would you awfully mind coming to the Pit-Pat, Gelly?' The young man's speech had a new note of diffidence in it. 'I'd be frightfully grateful if you would. Unless you're going to turn out to be a professor yourself? Yes, please, taxi.'

Adrian escorted them lovingly through the revolving doors, and the three stood on the pavement outside. The young man still struggled visibly with his emotion. As the taxi drew up, he made a final grab for his retreating self-esteem.

'Do you really know that girl well? Will you absolutely swear that she really is a lady doctor?'

Adrian helped them both into the taxi and slammed the door without replying. The young man hung out of the window.

'Is she?' he insisted.

Adrian drew a small plain ring out of his pocket and dandled it carelessly in his open palm.

'What?' said he. 'Still harping on my wife? Naughty. Naughty. Good night.'

TENTS OF EXILE.

BY DOUGLAS V. DUFF.

THE spectacle of a monarch or chieftain suffering the indignities and humiliations of exile has always been one that has aroused, if not pity, at least the romantic interest of the world at large. When this exile has been caused by no criminal action, involving a whole people in its consequences, but has been the outcome of the heroic resistance of a little people against what they considered to be the oppression of a mighty Empire, the sight of that people's leader, and his notables, exiled to a barren spot in one of the world's greatest deserts, can fill us with nothing but pity for their plight, and admiration for their self-sacrificing courage.

Sultan Pasha el Atrash, the Paramount Chieftain of the Druze nation, his relatives, and many of the other ruling chiefs, eke out a precarious existence in the Wadi Sirhan, a desolate valley in the wilds of the Arabian Desert, on the frontiers of Transjordan and the Nejdian territory. This valley, with its spring grazing grounds, has always been a bone of contention between the great warring Bedouin tribes of the Desert. Three or four years ago, a party of the Beni Sakhr tribe were surprised there by some of the warriors of the Wahabite confederacy, and butchered to a man. It is even reported that the two sons of the sheikh of the herdsmen were led, captive, before their bound father, and slain before his eyes. Then the old man's throat was cut by the fanatical tribesmen from the eastern confines of the Desert, after his arms had been separately broken. Raids are of yearly occurrence in this area, as the best, in fact almost the sole, grazing for the huge flocks of sheep and goats of the nomadic tribes is to be found there, immediately after the rainy season. Ambushes, murders, robbery and inter-tribal warfare are the normal life of the herdsmen in the Wadi Sirhan, and it is in this land of sudden onfalls and continual harrying that the Sultan Pasha, with a few hundred faithful warriors, manages to maintain a precarious foothold, with the added anxiety that some sudden shift of the winds of diplomacy in Europe might cause his surrender to his enemies of France.

The Sultan Pasha, a noble and commanding figure, still upright and supple in his carriage, despite the seventy-odd years that have

passed over his head, and able to mount his horse as nimbly as any of his younger warriors, maintains his absolute sway over the poor remnant of the hordes of fighting men who once answered to his call. He is ably seconded by his sons, and by several nephews, the leader amongst these latter being Selim Bey el Atrash, the old Sultan's worthy lieutenant, a legendary figure for his personal courage and skill in war, whose name still echoes resoundingly along the slopes and valleys of his native Jebel Druze in far-off Syria. Selim Bey is the Chieftain's principal go-between in the dealings with the Druze of Northern Palestine, and is most active in those districts in seeing to the payment of the subsidy which the loyal tribesmen make to the Sultan.

The Druze are a most interesting and unique race, distinct in every way from their Moslem, Christian and Jewish neighbours. For the most part they are a fair people; light-coloured hair is common amongst them, whilst the majority are blue or grey-eyed, and their complexions are lighter in tone than the surrounding nations. They differ greatly in dress. Their skin, also, is very different. A Druze will always have a great deal of white in his garments. They wear a kind of *tarbush*, but it does not carry the tasselled cords of the Moslem, and is bound around with several yards of the white local cloth into the form of a *laffi*. This white turban of the Druze is quite distinctive. Again their appearance is much cleaner, their bodies and clothing bear the trace of continual and efficient washing. The Druze women, particularly, impress one with a sense of their cleanliness, when compared with their Arab neighbours; the average Druze girl would, if dressed in European garments, easily pass, at first glance, for an English country girl of the West-country type.

This fairness of the Druze complexion may be accounted for by their own legend, to the effect that when, in 1291, the last Crusading strongholds, St. John of Acre and Castle Pilgrim, fell before the Moslem hordes, hundreds of the fleeing soldiers of the Red Cross managed to escape, with their families, from the sack of Acre, and joining with the garrisons of some of the outlying castles in the hills, fled into the fastnesses of the mountains of Upper Galilee and the Jebel Druze. There they joined with the despised and, then, weak new sect of the Druze, who, not being Moslems, did not hold them in mortal hatred. The fugitives intermarried with the sectaries, whilst some of the hillmen espoused the Frankish women, and in due time the nation of the Druzes, as we know them to-day,

was formed. This is purely legendary, of course, but when, besides their almost European fairness, it is remembered that their features are definitely non-Semitic in cast, and that many of the traditional virtues of the days of chivalry are still cherished amongst them, such as great courage in battle, the incapability of betraying, for any reason, a brother Druze to outsiders, and the great veneration for any warrior killed in battle, the grounds for believing them to be in possession of a great admixture of Crusading blood become more than mere supposition.

They are divided into two great sections, the Initiated and the Unenlightened. These latter know very little about the inner mysteries of their religion and are of no great account in the conduct of their national affairs. The Initiated, comparatively few in number, on the other hand, are fully conversant with their religious ceremonies and are looked up to with the greatest veneration by the others. The chief amongst this latter class form the Great Council of the Druzes, and whatever they determine upon must be implicitly obeyed by all the others. The members of this Council are almost all hereditary sheikhs of large numbers of the fighting men, who appear to be mustered on a territorial basis, and their word is absolute law amongst their subordinates. In Palestine proper there are only two of these great chiefs, Sheik Azzam of Dahlieh el Carmel village, and Sheik Suleiman of Abu Sinnan village, situated to the eastwards of the Ladder of Tyre, on the Holy Land's northern frontiers.

If the Government wishes to have any dealings with the Druzes it is to one or other of these aged gentlemen that it must go, state its requirements, and then await developments as soon as the sheikhs consider it wise and politic to render a reply. One thing the Druze will, however, never do, and that is to surrender any of their people to the Government on a criminal charge; a murderer, even, is given every facility by his brother-tribesmen to evade justice. This has been most clearly shown in the last few years. A notorious Druze, one Fuad el Libnani, was badly 'wanted' by the French authorities in Syria, where, in fact, he had been 'condemned to death in default.' He crossed the border into Palestine, and, after the Rising of 1929, when many Jews were massacred by the Arabs, he joined a large body of outlaws, calling themselves the 'Green Hand Gang,' which operated for months in the hills of Upper Galilee, raiding Jewish colonies, attacking and disarming Police outposts and patrols, and committing brigandage on the

roads. When the leader of the outlaws, Ahmet Tafish, was finally apprehended by the authorities, Fuad became the captain, and still contrives, by the shelter and food given him by his co-religionists, to maintain a head against the Government. The Druze will not actively help him, or give him arms and ammunition, but their code forbids them to refuse a brother shelter, food, drink and clothing, or to give the slightest hint to the authorities as to his whereabouts. When questioned, they have never seen him nor heard him, in fact they do not know his name.

Fuad has fled several times from Palestine when the hunt has become too hot after him. Once, after he had ambushed a Police patrol near Rameh, in which an unfortunate Lance-corporal, Abdu Raouf Kabbaj, was killed, he fled to the Wadi Sirhan and begged to be allowed to engage in the bodyguard of the Sultan Pasha. This the worthy old chieftain would not allow, he valued the friendship of the British too much, but he harboured him for a while and then ordered him to leave the camp, never to return. Not till months afterwards did the Palestine Government find out that this had occurred. Fuad then left and fled to the Hedjaz, where he joined a wandering Wahabi band, leaving them later. He is supposed to have become an officer in the army of the King, Abdul Aziz ibn Saoud, only to be dismissed later when that monarch found whom he was sheltering. Fuad then returned to Palestine, where he still remains, a thorn in the side of the Government and an ever-present terror to the Jewish colonies. The Druze themselves would be glad to be rid of him, but their code of honour refuses to allow them to betray him in any way, despite the fact that there is a large reward on his head, which would, in the case of their Arab friends, be an irresistible inducement to sell his body to the seeking Police. In the same way, the Druze brigands, who in 1923 fired on the escort of Sir Herbert Samuel, killing three British constables and severely wounding others, were only caught by a sheer accident, after the Druze inhabitants had denied all knowledge of them. They, personally, had nothing but detestation for the attackers, as they wished to stand well with the British (the attack was, in any case, a mistake), and it was clearly to their advantage to help the Government, but they calmly and stoically faced ruin and the prospect of heavy fines, because their code of honour forbade them to assist any foreigner to seize a Druze.

Their religion is, of course, a close secret of which no outsider really knows anything. Books have been written on this subject,

but on several occasions, when the writer has translated parts of some of them to members of the Initiated, they have merely smiled and said that the writer did not know what he was writing about. This much is known, however—that they are followers of a certain Caliph el Hakim of Egypt, who, in the early years of the eleventh century, overran Palestine. He was inflamed with an intense anti-Christian zeal and destroyed many of the basilicas and shrines which the Emperor Constantine the Great had built over the various Holy Places. His destruction of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem was almost complete. He is believed to have proclaimed himself, if not an incarnation of the Divine, at least as the last and greatest of the Prophets, revealing a later dispensation than Muhammad, and left behind him a secret Book, which is now the Scriptures of the Druze religion. They are continually reproached by the Moslems as idolators, and it seems certain that some sort of a figure is used in their ceremonies. Once a year they have their great Night of Looking, when all the Druzes of a neighbourhood resort to some ancient meeting-place, and there, men and women together, spend the whole night in darkness, celebrating the secret rites of their religion. It is death for any outsider to be present. It appears, from the scanty material available, that this night's service is very like the old Phœnician ritual of Astarte, but, of course, any closer connection is a matter for conjecture. There is no tighter-mouthed person on earth than the Druze when his religion is being discussed by outsiders. As a nation they allow no converts, and bitterly oppose any intermarriage with outsiders, which means, of course, eventually, that the fate of the Samaritans, whose last survival still persists at Nablus, will overtake them. A Druze girl guilty of any sexual offence with a foreigner is instantly killed, as well as her partner in sin, and any offspring of the illicit union is also promptly disposed of. All this being so, it is extremely unlikely that any authentic information as to their religion will ever reach the outer world.

They have always been, throughout the whole course of their turbulent history, warlike, courageous and quick to resent any affront. They were practically always at war with their Turkish overlords. In 1861 they raided Damascus, a feat which they repeated in 1925. In 1912 the Turks launched a campaign of extermination against them, yet they managed to maintain their positions in the fastnesses of the Jebel Druze. This campaign was only interrupted by the entry of the Ottoman Empire into the

World War, in which many of the Druze fought for them against their Frankish enemies, though turning on the Turks at the end, and being of the greatest use in harrying the routed rearguard of their hereditary foemen.

It was a great disappointment to them when the Mandate for Syria was given to the French, whom the Druze hated, on account of the French army which was landed in 1861 to protect the Maronite Christians, who were being hunted up and down the hillsides of the Lebanon by the Druzes. They had suffered from the severity of the French generals of Napoleon the Third, and considered themselves to be at blood-feud with that great nation ; consequently, when the Syrian Revolt broke out, it had no more fervent supporters than they. The Sultan Pasha did his very best to have some of the grievances, which the Druze entertained, redressed by the French authorities. There was a certain French captain, the military governor of their area, who was greatly beloved by them, and who, through some stupid official jealousy, was superseded, an inefficient darling of some bureau or other, who did not understand the people over whom he held sway, being sent to replace him. The Sultan Pasha did his utmost to have the other officer reinstated, but without success. There were a host of other grievances, both real and imaginary. In a last despairing effort to avert war, the Sultan Pasha came to the seat of the Mandatory Government at Beirut, and asked to see the High Commissioner, General Sarraïl of Salonica fame, only to be most rudely and discourteously refused an interview, the message being taken to this leader of 200,000 fighting men by the mouth of a menial. The old Sultan, bitterly resenting this insult, patiently asked for another interview. This was even more rudely refused, and the old man said, as he left the *Haut Commissariat*, ' If His Excellency will not listen to my voice, that of an old man, he must listen to the voice of the rifles in the hands of my warriors.' He only escaped from Beirut with difficulty, and as soon as he reached his capital town, Suïeda, warfare promptly commenced.

It was hopeless from the very start; no one realised this more clearly than the Druze themselves. Syria was full of French troops, armed with all the latest devices of warfare. All that the tribesmen had were their rifles, with none too much ammunition for these, but, for a while, at least, it looked as though they would overrun Syria. French garrisons were shut up and besieged in a number of outlying forts. Damascus, with the aid of the more

lawless of its people, was sacked, the Azzam palace in that city, the glorious palace of the old rulers, was looted and partially burnt. The French had to systematically shell their own town to drive out the raiders, and troops had to be poured into the country. Gradually the inevitable happened—the Druze were driven farther and farther back into the fastnesses of the Jebel Druze, fighting every inch of the way, delivering flying raids on the railway between Beirut and Damascus where it crossed the high Lebanon range, and on the Hedjaz Railway near Deraa. There were thousands of French casualties and thousands of dead Druze, but, to the very last, they maintained the war. The women, in the traditional way of their nation, followed their husbands into action, and when a woman's husband fell, she would rush forward, and pull his *abaya* over his body, so that the remaining warriors would not be discouraged by the sight of his dead features.

Many strange incidents occurred, amongst them this:—The British officer in charge of a large Police outpost on the northern border of Palestine was awakened one night to find a body of armed Druzes around his post. They came up to the barbed wire and it was seen that they were escorting some thirty-odd French soldiers.

'*Ya Effendi*,' said the Druze chief, 'I want you to take over these soldiers. They are not of the *Franzawi*, but are poor dogs of strangers, hired for a pitifully small sum to fight the battles of their masters. I do not want to kill them, I cannot keep them as prisoners, and they say that they wish to leave the French army for good. I do not know whether to believe them or not. Will you give me your advice, *bil qalam sharaffak Inglizi*, on your English word of honour, as I trust none of the *Franzawi*, as to what I should do with them?'

The officer went out to the prisoners, and spoke to them. They were a platoon of the Foreign Legion, mainly Germans and Poles, under a sergeant. This latter was furiously angry; he said that he had been in charge of two machine-guns, which were so old and inefficient that they had hopelessly jammed, and that the Druze, scorning to use firearms on them, had captured them by throwing stones until they had surrendered. This treatment seemed to have deeply offended the worthy sergeant's pride and was most bitterly resented by him. The officer asked them if they intended to report back to their regiment supposing that they were released. The Legionaries seemed to think he was mad to entertain such an

idea. One of them said that such a piece of good fortune had never been known to come in a soldier's way before, and that, as far as he was concerned, this surrender would save him all the trouble and risk of having to desert. The only dissident to this plan was the sergeant, but when one of the others pointed out that he would be held responsible for the loss of the machine-guns and the fact that the whole platoon had been captured by stone-throwing, he would undoubtedly either be shot for cowardice, or else spend several years in a penal battalion. The sergeant then assented, and promised that he would not return to the Legion.

The officer told the Druze leader what these soldiers were, and promised him that he would send them under escort to Acre, where they would be confined in the old castle-prison until their respective consuls were able to effect their repatriation. So, after he had given the Druzes the coffee, the warriors left and returned to their own affairs.

Gradually the hopeless war drew to its inevitable and miserable end. Suieda was besieged, stormed and sacked. It is alleged that the black Senegalese troops behaved in such a manner to the mere handful of survivors, that the sight of a French military uniform will always be an object of the blackest hatred to all Druze. The chieftains who were not dead on the various battlefields, or on the great gallows in the Place de Canons in Beirut, fled for their lives. The Sultan Pasha and the surviving members of his family took refuge in Transjordan, eventually settling in the Wadi Sirhan; the other great leader, Doctor Shahbander, went to Europe and America, to try and rouse popular sympathy for the defeated tribesmen. In the welter of blood, the reek of the smoke of burning Suieda, and the penalties of heavy and ruinous fines, the French, with their usual military efficiency, stamped out the last smouldering embers of the revolt.

It was in his tent in his place of exile that the writer first met the fallen chieftain. Some months before he had done a service to Selim Bey el Atrash, who was, at the time, visiting the Palestine Druze to collect funds for the upkeep of the Sultan Pasha. Selim Bey had called at the penal camp, of which the writer was in charge, asking to visit some Druze prisoners in the compound. After according him this courtesy, the writer asked him and his friends to lunch in his bungalow, and was entertained by many stories of the war in Syria, which had then been finished some three years. The guests, including some of the notables of Dahlia-el-Carmel,

were intrigued by his collection of firearms, and praised the wonderful marksmanship of Selim Bey. As soon as lunch was finished the whole party adjourned to the camp's rifle range. There Selim Bey certainly lived up to his reputation. Seemingly without taking aim he broke five pint-bottles with five successive shots at four hundred yards, the targets being, at that range, scarcely visible. Then, at a figure target, he galloped across and fired from the saddle, at three hundred and fifty yards range, putting all ten shots into the figure. Going back to a thousand yards, he fired deliberately at a head-and-shoulder target, hitting it no less than eight times out of ten shots. Truly an amazing display of marksmanship.

Selim Bey was so delighted at the hospitality that he had received, and, I suspect, with the opportunity that had been given him to impress the local Druze, that he wrote out an invitation in the name of his uncle, the Sultan Pasha, to visit his camp, and also commanding all Druze to treat the bearer with courtesy and consideration and to give him all the help they could. This *chit* proved most useful to the writer some nine months later, when he was stationed in the Druze country to the north. He had been visiting the ruins of Petra in Transjordan, and whilst in Maan on his return journey, having several days of his leave still to run, determined to visit the Sultan Pasha. It was rough going across the gravelly, shingly desert, but he managed to drive his car into the northern extremity of the Wadi Sirhan, where, as evening was falling, he saw a tribesman, wearing the distinctive white *laffi* of the Druze. The man was heavily armed with rifle, revolver and sword, and was inclined to be hostile until the letter of Selim Bey was produced, whereupon he agreed to accompany the driver a couple of miles down the Wadi, until they were near the Sultan Pasha's encampment. There the tribesman left him, returning some two hours later with an escort of some twenty young warriors, led by Selim Bey's brother Hassan, who rode up and, raising hand to forehead, said:

'*Mahaba, me't Mahabba, ya Effendi. Faddul l'il Khaymi el Sultan Pasha—Welcome, a hundred Welcomes, be welcome to the pavilion of the Sultan Pasha.*'

Closing around the car the warriors escorted it some four miles to a group of black Bedouin tents, surrounding some squat mud houses. There appeared to be a thousand persons or so in the encampment, and many fine horses were picketed in rows near the

tents, whilst there was everywhere a movement of armed men. As the car stopped, Selim Bey himself ran up and greeted the visitor, with the graceful Eastern courtesy, and conducted him into a tent, where everything had been made ready for his entertainment.

'As soon as you have washed and rested yourself a little, and had some coffee, the Sultan Pasha would be glad if you will come and see him,' said Selim Bey. 'He has been told about you and your kindness to me and mine in the land of Palestine, and he wants to show you how a Druze can repay hospitality.'

When he had changed his clothes and freshened himself up a little, Selim Bey took him into the group of tents where the old chieftain awaited him. The Sultan Pasha rose from the rugs as he entered and extended his hand.

'Be welcome, Effendi. I have heard many good things about you from my nephew. The Druze of Palestine speak well of you, and say that you are kind to all poor prisoners under your control. One of your prisoners, Hussein el Mughari, is a son of one of my old servants, and I am glad that you have not been harsh or cruel towards this one of our brothers. A man in authority who is merciful to those in his power is always a man to be esteemed. Be seated, pray.'

Coffee was served, in the Arab fashion, as soon as the old man clapped his hands softly, followed by some Damascus sweetmeats. Conversation became general as, on the Sultan's invitation, several of the leaders entered the tent and sat down in a semicircle.

'Life is very hard here, *ya ibni*, O my son,' said the old chieftain. 'I am not as young as once I was, and old bones look for comfort. In the Jebel the air is good, the water is pure, the earth is kindly, and I could see the young men and maidens growing up, marrying, and bearing children to carry on the flower of the Druze blood. Here there are few women, children are seldom born, the ground is almost desert, there is always the danger of raiders, my men are few, and every year they grow older, but, poor as it is, it is at least free. Here there is no shadow of the invader, here we can live free as our fathers lived, and breathe the air without let or hindrance. Is it not so?' he concluded, turning to the other chiefs, who agreed vehemently with him.

'But, *ya Ahtufna el Sultan Pasha*, if the French would give you good terms, would you not return to the Jebel Druze? Your people there must be calling out for you and miss your paternal leadership,' said the visitor.

'Never will they give me terms that would satisfy my honour. As for my people, I can rule them as well from here as I could from Suieda. They will listen to my voice wherever I may be; my location does not matter—it is the voice of their father that counts.'

As he was speaking, one of the chiefs entered, and, after awaiting the end of his monarch's speech, said that dinner was ready. The Sultan ordered it to be served and the usual Arab banquet was produced, lambs roasted whole, mountains of rice swimming in mutton grease, a sort of salad, pistachio nuts cooked with the rice, and the peculiar and delicious Druze stew in small bowls. Flat loaves of bread and bowls of *lebban*, curdled buttermilk, and brass basins of water, completed the banquet. In accordance with Druze etiquette everyone gobbled their food as rapidly as possible, in order not to incur the shame of being the last, and all hurried away from the feast as soon as they had finished, to wash their hands in the water poured by servants from earthenware ewers.

After dinner there was a great stir and bustle in the camp, which, Selim Bey explained, was the posting of the night guard, a most necessary precaution in this dangerous place, where a raid might be expected at any time. In fact the camp seemed to be run on the strictest military lines, rosters being kept which ensured that every man should have his due share of guard duties. As soon as the sentries had taken up their places, the Druze chieftains retired to their tents and huts, and sleep descended on the camp.

The writer's quarters were most luxurious, considering the circumstances. Priceless old Shirazi rugs were laid on the floor, the brasswork was heavily inlaid in copper and silver and was evidently work centuries old, the *lahafs* of the bed were covered in heavy brocaded silk, whilst scarlet silken hangings graced the interior walls of the tent. In contrast to this, the sleeping-room of the Sultan Pasha was bare to the verge of austerity; nothing was to be found in it which would be out of place in the tent of a chieftain engaged in an arduous campaign, for, as Selim Bey said, the leader considered himself to be in exile, and the sight of the usual appurtenances that would adorn his palatial dwelling in his own country filled the old man with a fierce and unbearable nostalgia.

The next morning when the writer was about to take his leave (in accordance with Druze etiquette, a guest leaves immediately after breakfast), the Sultan Pasha, after pressing his guest to stay,

with the grave courtesy of his people, took leave of him in this fashion.

'*Ruah, ma Sallaami, ya Daiſi*—Go with peace, O my Guest, and remember that you have seen me happy. All things are in the Hands of God. As God has thought it best for me to spend my last years here in the depths of the Desert, I must conform cheerfully to His Will, as He clearly thinks that this is the best thing for me. At least He has allowed me to be surrounded by faithful and loving hearts and has not left me quite forsaken. *Ya ibni*, O my Son, remember, show mercy to those who are in your power, thinking always that there is a Greater than you, who will reward and punish. Go with peace, Effendi, and sometimes think of the people of the Druze and of me, their father, an exile here for liberty, having refused to bow to tyranny, and to enslave my many sons.'

So majestic and stately did the old chieftain appear, that the writer did a thing that he had never done before to any Oriental. Bowing over the old hand that had wrought so mightily in what it had considered the cause of his national liberty, he kissed it, and carried it to his forehead, with the salute that a son in the Arab lands gives to his father, saying:

'*Kaahtrakh, y'Abba, wa Ullah Kaleikh*—I beg your permission to go, Father, and God guard you.'

'*Ruah, ma Sallaami, ya ibni*,' said the Sultan Pasha.

'*Wa Ullah selmakh*—and God grant you Peace,' said the writer, as he left him.

The return journey to Maan was accomplished without difficulty, and then, via Amman and Jerusalem, he returned to his station. At his camp his servant was taking the luggage out of the boot of the car, when he found a very richly ornamented dagger, silver-scabbarded and gold-hilted, an Arabic-lettered label attached.

'To my son amongst the Franks, who has shown me and mine a courtesy such as we have seldom received from his nation. In the hope that he will always remember his friends of the Druze.'

The last exquisite courtesy of that noble old warrior and chieftain of fighting men, who did not wish to either embarrass his guest, or to be embarrassed by his thanks.

ANTHONY TROLLOPE AND THE 'CORNHILL.'

ANTHONY TROLLOPE died on December 6, 1882, just fifty years ago. This semi-centenary offers to every critic an irresistible opportunity of expounding through his person the mysteries of popularity and those successive waves of acclamation, depreciation and rehabilitation which time and again uplift, engulf, at last refloat a literary reputation. Out of a watery limbo a still solid hull reappears, though stripped, maybe, of sundry tophammer and cumbersome spars. All that has been said of his style, his methods, his matter, will surely be re-analysed and re-assembled, and the perspicacious of to-day will demonstrate at large how much wiser and truer they are in their calm perspective and epimethean enthusiasm than the generations of their predecessors. They will display the man in the writer, the writer in the man, with detail almost more than life-size : reconstruct the hunting man in harness, the Civil Servant whose restlessness frustrated his official ambitions, the hater of red tape who trafficked with the Muse by rule and measure.

The CORNHILL pen does not propose here to embark on a history of Trollope the man or a detailed estimate of Trollope the novelist, nor to ex-cathedrate in summing up the judgments of the century. But there is a certain appropriateness at the time of this anniversary and in these pages to recall Trollope's connection with the CORNHILL itself and with George Smith, presiding genius of Smith, Elder & Co., and founder of the CORNHILL, a genial friend and generous venturer among books and the writers of books.

In addition to its large business as an Indian agency, the firm of Smith, Elder was a publishing house, already in the fifties of last century enjoying something of a romantic as well as business fame through the Brontë connection. On this side George Smith was the moving spirit. Books, like plays, are kittle cattle. Success in either is difficult to forecast. George Smith enjoyed the speculative element in this branch of his business. He had a sound literary judgment, and was ready to back his own judgment in practical form. At the same time, he enjoyed the society of the writers with whom he had come into contact from quite early days, and with his strong personality, his sympathetic humour and wise

common sense, his friends gained in such friendship no less than they gave.

It was at the end of the 'fifties that the idea of starting a new magazine occurred to him. For a score of years it had been a favourite custom to publish popular novels in shilling parts, month by month, which were welcomed with a fervour astonishing to later generations in a very different world of books and book-distribution. With this method of sale the enthusiasm was sustained, the initial outlay moderate, the returns a steady current. The experiment had already been tried of diverting these waves of popularity into the regular channel of the lighter magazines. Several of Dickens' novels had first run through such periodicals as *Bentley's Miscellany*, *Household Words* and *All the Year Round* under Dickens' own editorship. Why not now combine the lure of the serial with the literary excellence of the more serious reviews, and offer readers a magazine which at the price of the single instalments or of the light magazines alone should appeal to many interests over and above serial fiction? A good business proposition, surely, but more than that, a thing of active and lasting value in the service of good literature. The plan succeeded; in fact, it succeeded so well that within a few years the issue of a new novel in shilling parts ceased to pay. Nor did the experiment of publishing in sixpenny parts, which was tried with Trollope's *Last Chronicle of Barset*, among others, prove a success. This method of serialisation died out.

To find the serial which was to launch his project, George Smith had not far to go. He had always enjoyed Thackeray's work. Indeed, he tells the story against himself that when as a youngster he had to attend a new-book sale and take note of the numbers sold and prices given, he happened to pick up a copy of *The Paris Sketch Book* and lost himself in it so completely that he forgot to take a single note. This early started his ambition to publish for Thackeray, an ambition realised in 1850 with one of his Christmas books, to be followed by *Esmond* and its successors. By that time his personal friendship with Thackeray had begun. He had asked him to dinner to meet his guest Charlotte Brontë, who desired to make acquaintance with the novelist whose work she so greatly admired. The basis of the new magazine, then, was to be a Thackeray novel in twelve monthly parts. Later, when other efforts to secure an editor had failed and George Smith was at his wits' end, he had one of his sudden brain-waves. Why should not Thackeray edit the magazine, while Smith himself helped with the necessary

business details? Here was a man with a fine literary judgment and a reputation with men of letters as well as the public. Any writer would be proud to contribute where he was editor. No sooner thought than done. Thackeray promptly accepted and threw himself into the scheme wholeheartedly.

As the plan took shape, many literary friends of editor and publisher were approached for contributions. At this time Anthony Trollope was not known personally to either Thackeray or George Smith, for his official work had kept him far from London, in Ireland or the West Country, or despatched him on postal missions abroad, and his books had been issued by other publishing firms. Now, however, at the end of October, 1859, when he was on the point of taking up an English appointment close to London, he approached Thackeray, offering to write short stories for the forthcoming CORNHILL. Here was an opportunity that was turned to good account.

Trollope had been a clerk in the post office for the last five and twenty years. For this or any profession he was ill equipped. His education had been cruelly muddled by a father whose good intentions were frustrated by a genius for failure in everything he undertook. Before the boy was fifteen, his good prospects at Winchester were cut short, his self-respect poisoned by finding himself openly stranded there, penniless and with school fees unpaid. When his parents returned from America and Mrs. Trollope repaired their broken fortunes by her lively book on American manners, they settled down as once before on a farm close to Harrow; Anthony, sensitive, shy, self-centred, trudging to and fro along the country lanes as a day boy at the great school, found himself an outsider, unattached to any group, without friends, without sympathy, without incentive—a solitary, and the more lonely, the more mocked by the herd. He learnt nothing; only such a farcical examination as that described by him in *The Three Clerks* enabled him to take up the post-office clerkship to which he got a nomination. One thing only he gained during this purgatory of his school-days. He withdrew his bruised self into an imaginative retreat, finding strength and solace in weaving a kind of novel round his ideal doings from day to day: not anyhow, but in ordered sequence and reasonable development of the characters invented. Building up in boyhood an ordered creation to protect himself against the unkindness of his world, he came to realise when he grew up that in some form of literary creation lay his chance of winning distinc-

tion and lifting himself out of the workaday rut. Not poetry—for nature had not granted him the poetic gift; not scholarship, for education had left him without learning; but the writing of novels. Already he knew his own faculty for seeing people as they are and drawing characters that might indeed be typical, but instead of being mere types, were human beings developing from one phase to the next.

Opportunity, however, was slow in coming. His seven years as an underpaid junior in London were a time of poverty and imminent shipwreck, from which he only escaped by volunteering for a little-desired post in the west of Ireland. But it was active work; it meant contact with people, not files: exhilarating journeys across country on horseback and writing personal reports which needed not be merely dry-as-dust. From a despised quill-driver Trollope rapidly became a personality; he was recognised as a valuable public servant, and succeeded in arranging his work so well that while he carried out his growing responsibilities most efficiently he was able to take healthy recreation in his beloved hunting.

The Irish scene in which he now found himself was full of lively character. Charles Lever had already made a mark with his gay books of rattling adventure and Hibernian irresponsibility. Three years of Ireland had provided Trollope with many a lively story out of his own experience. But he had not put pen to paper, though the desire to become a writer of novels still burned within him. He had, however, prepared for it by organising his work in his official profession, while with his outdoor life he was gaining sufficient bodily and mental vigour to venture upon a second profession alongside the first. With this settled vigour and with the firm resolution that re-disciplined his habit of life and enforced upon himself a regime of early hours and orderly labour, the act and art of writing were taking clear shape in forthright expression and corresponding economy of time. At last it was possible for the inward castle-building of his youth to take outward shape on a solid foundation. He tells in his *Autobiography* how just before his marriage in 1844 he and his friend John Merivale came upon the modern ruins of a country house and wandered about the place imagining the causes that had brought about the misery they saw there. Here he fabricated the plot for the first novel he was to publish, *The Macdermots of Ballycloran*, a tale of Irish life before the potato disease, the famine and the Encumbered Estates Act.

In this and its successor, *The Kellys and the O'Kellys* (1847 and 1848) he served his apprenticeship to his art, but like many other apprenticeships, without the earning of any pay. But it did earn something else. A friend in London pulled a wire over the dinner-table; a bigwig on *The Times* half-promised to have *The O'Kellys* noticed in that august journal—and at last the review appeared. 'Of *The Kellys and the O'Kellys* we may say what the master said to his footman, when the man complained of the constant supply of legs of mutton on the kitchen table. "Well, John, legs of mutton are good substantial food"; and we may say also what John replied: "Substantial, sir;—yes, they are substantial, but a little coarse."' That was the review, adds Trollope, and even that did not sell the book!

Ireland had not paid; a story of France, *La Vendée*, more happily brought in £20, but a play and a projected Handbook to Ireland came to nothing. He did not strike on his best vein till the next decade, when he had come to England for a couple of years to inspect the working of the postal delivery in the West country, and by a happy chance was moved to write his first clerical story, *The Warden*. That he was able from the outset to draw such life-like pictures of clerics and the cross-currents that agitate a cathedral close was not the result of any special experience. His human contacts had been many, but not with the clergy more than with any other class; he had never lived under the shadow of a cathedral nor ever spoken, so far as he knew, to an archdeacon. His people were the offspring of his 'moral consciousness,' as they called it in those days—the creative imagination ever weaving dramas of life and character in his brain. That imagination laid hold of essentials so realistically that the famous Archdeacon of his conception was hailed as an archdeacon indeed, and led the way to future novels that set out to deal with clerical life.

The depiction of clerical character, however, was not his object that midsummer evening when he wandered round the purlieus of Salisbury Cathedral, shaping out the story of *The Warden* and fixing on the exact site of Hiram's Hospital. There was a theme ready to his hand in the recent agitation about two evils in the Church; here the rich sinecures that had insensibly grown out of institutions meant for charitable purposes, there the deplorable poverty in which certain country parsons were expected to work. To this theme his characters were subsidiary, but the characterisation meant more to his readers than the story, and its measure of success

determined the line which was to bring him his best fame. Without being a popular success, *The Warden* marked the turn of the tide. The new vein was developed in *Barchester Towers* (1857) along with other types of characterisation, and was destined finally to effect the triumph of his long-pursued ambition through his association with the CORNHILL.

In October, 1859, as has been said, Thackeray only knew him—and that with warm appreciation—as a writer who in addition to the novels already mentioned, had to his recent credit *The Three Clerks*, *Doctor Thorne* and *The Bertrams*. Trollope's offer to supply short stories gave an opportunity to double the serial attractions of the CORNHILL. When he called at the office in answer to the firm's letter, and naturally asked what was their scale of payment, George Smith replied that they had no fixed scale for such works as his. Would he mind saying what was the largest sum he had ever received for a novel? £500, he said, whereupon George Smith offered him double the amount if he would write one of his clerical novels to begin in the first number of the CORNHILL. This meant that the first instalment must be ready within six weeks. Fame and fortune seemed at last within his grasp. The opportunity justified him in breaking one of his most cherished rules—the rule never to begin publishing a story before it was completed. For though he had in hand a half-finished novel, *Castle Richmond*, the contract for which his publishers were ready to postpone, the CORNHILL saw clearly where Trollope's forte really lay. An Irish story was not wanted; the new novel must deal with a clerical subject. Such was the genesis of *Framley Parsonage*. Thus Trollope was apparently forced to write against time; but then he always wrote against a time-table of his own fixing. To write for once against a date fixed by someone else was merely a pleasant spur as long as no accident intervened. His experience here may have contributed to his express belief that, to speak of good work and not of mere scamping, the work that has been done quickest has been done the best. At all events, under the flattering stimulus of the CORNHILL invitation he certainly gave of his best, and the founders of the CORNHILL were justified of their choice.

Writing of this startling piece of good fortune in his *Autobiography* long afterwards, Trollope remarks, 'What astonished me most was the fact that at so late a day the new CORNHILL MAGAZINE should be in want of a novel!' and ascribes this default to Thackeray's growing habit of procrastination. But though *Framley Parsonage*

took the place of honour in the first number of the CORNHILL, this was not because Thackeray was in default. *Lovel the Widower* duly appeared at the end of the number; but as George Smith records, *Framley Parsonage* was given the place of honour by Thackeray's own arrangement and on the grounds of pure courtesy; it was exactly as a host would invite a guest to walk into a room before himself—the editor looked upon himself as a host and his contributor as a guest.

The first consequence of this CORNHILL connection was that Trollope was promptly introduced into that literary world from which his long years in Ireland had kept him aloof. In the January which saw the birth of the new magazine, George Smith gave the first of his monthly dinners to CORNHILL contributors. To Trollope it was above all memorable as the starting-point of many enduring friendships. He had arrived.

Of his first meeting with Thackeray himself George Smith records a curious anecdote. It must have happened at this first CORNHILL dinner, the occasion of Trollope's first visit to Smith's house, though during part of that January at least, Thackeray was in Paris hugely enjoying each tidings of the CORNHILL's amazing success. However that may be,

'at one of these dinners Trollope was to meet Thackeray for the first time, and was eagerly looking forward to an introduction to him. Just before dinner I took him up to Thackeray and introduced him with suitable *empressement*. Thackeray curtly said "How do?" and, to my wonder and Trollope's anger, turned on his heel! He was suffering at the time from an ailment which, at that particular moment, caused him a sudden spasm of pain; though we, of course, could not know this. I well remember the expression on Trollope's face at that moment, and no one who knew Trollope will doubt that he *could* look furious on an adequate—and sometimes on an inadequate—occasion! He came to me the next morning in a very wrathful mood, and said that, had it not been that he was in my house for the first time, he would have walked out of it. He vowed he would never speak to Thackeray again, and so forth. I did my best to soothe him; though rather violent and irritable, he had a fine nature with a substratum of great kindness, and I believe he left my room in a happier frame of mind than when he entered it. He and Thackeray afterwards became close friends.'

In the course of the next year Trollope contributed to the CORNHILL a shorter novel, *The Struggles of Brown, Jones and*

Robinson, a humorous satire on the ways of trade. Looking back at this in after years, he confessed that he had little gift for this kind of writing, and never tried it again. It was not a success. George Smith, who had paid him £600 for the copyright, took it philosophically, only gently remarking that he did not think it equal to his usual work. Trollope, however, was not satisfied; to redeem his reputation he offered CORNHILL *The Small House at Allington* in September, 1862, one of his best novels, which again brought him in £3,000. The last of the CORNHILL serials was *The Claverings*, which appeared in 1867-8, and for this he received £2,800, the highest rate of payment in proportion to its length that was ever accorded to him. It may be noted that in this story he broke away from his favourite device of introducing personages whose names were already known to his readers and whose characters were familiar to himself. 'No one,' he remarks, 'appears here who had appeared before or who has been allowed to appear since.'

With dispassionate criticism he says in his *Autobiography* (1876):

'I consider the story as a whole to be good, though I am not aware that the public has ever corroborated that verdict. . . . But I doubt whether anyone reads *The Claverings* now. When I remember how many novels I have written, I have no right to expect that above a few of them shall endure even to the second year beyond publication.'

Those chosen few do, however, survive, and in the second generation since his death they have come again to a permanent place in the great literary succession. And they have done so because of the quality in which he excelled as a novelist, the delineation of character. It is the quality that makes the most lasting appeal to maturer minds. He was self-critical enough to know that his best books were precisely those in which he used this power best, and that without it, the liveliest plot may degenerate woodenly into a puppet show. Consciousness of this in his own case is the key to his general judgment on novelists: 'I think that the highest merit which a novel can have consists in perfect delineation of character, rather than in plot, or humour, or pathos.' Certainly it was true of himself.

With *The Claverings* ended his connection with the CORNHILL, though not with his friend and publisher George Smith, who a little later brought out his *Last Chronicle of Barset*. Moreover,

when he founded the *Pall Mall Gazette*, Trollope for some years was a valued contributor.

The tale of Trollope's relations with the CORNHILL and its founder may amusingly conclude with a bit of comedy to illustrate the merry humour of the two friends even over a business deal, which, there is reason to infer, ended in Trollope's acceptance of a compromise.

'One little anecdote,' says George Smith in his *Reminiscences*, 'may illustrate the somewhat unconventional manner in which the business of THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE was occasionally treated. Trollope came to me in Pall Mall, where we had a branch office, to arrange for a new serial. I told him my terms, but he demurred to my offer of £2,000, and said that he had hoped for £3,000. I shook my head. "Well," he replied, "let us toss for that other £1,000." I asked him if he wished to ruin me, and said that if my banker heard of my tossing authors for their copyrights he would certainly close my account; and what about my clerks? How I should demoralise them if they suspected me of tossing with an author for his manuscript! We ultimately came to an agreement on my terms, which were sufficiently liberal. But I felt uncomfortable—I felt mean—I had refused a challenge. To relieve my mind I said, "Now that is settled, if you will come over the way to my club, where we can have a little room to ourselves for five minutes, I will toss you for £1,000 with pleasure." Mr. Trollope did not accept the offer.'

LEONARD HUXLEY.

A CORRECTION.

MR. H. M. CUNDALL begs to correct the statement, in 'Peter Parley and the Battle of the Children's Books,' on p. 556 of the November issue, that his father, Joseph Cundall, author, publisher and pioneer in the improvement of children's books, was an engraver, although he wrote, among other books, *A Brief History of Wood Engraving*.—ED.

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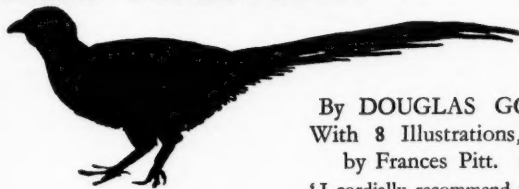
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